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The Presbyterian Record

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PRESBYTERIAN Record

January 2006



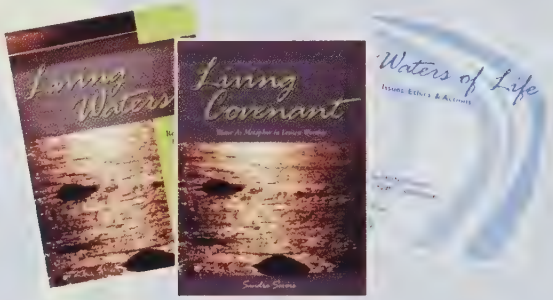
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David Harris



Trying to do justice

When Socrates opined in the *Republic* that "justice is the right ordering of the parts" he was in part saying that justice is frequently complex, with many parts that need to be balanced and given their due. One of the first tests of human maturity, for instance, is the ability to weigh the question of whether a person too poor to pay for food is really stealing if they take food without paying in order to live. Below a certain age (often well into our teens) we are unable to get past having been taught that stealing is wrong. Period. We sometimes forget that point, perhaps because there are so many parts to order correctly. Where human motives are involved, justice is rarely simple, but it must be done and be seen to be done.

"And what does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God," says the prophet Micah.

This issue of the *Record* has several stories where doing justice is an underlying theme. First, there is our story about justice in the corporate and investment world. It seems simple enough to say that companies or investors ought to operate or invest justly, but what does it mean in the church where investments fund not only ministry but the legal obligations of an employer to pensioners? On the one hand is the church's fiduciary responsibility to employees and the need to fund ministry. But as Art Van Seters points out, followed to its utilitarian conclusion, how the church invests its money would no longer be part of its ministry—surely both a logical and theological problem. Right ordering of the parts is not easy.

We also have an update on the residential schools story. Even finding the language to talk about the relationship between native Canadians on reserves and other Canadians is a challenge (some people object to the appellation "Canadian" for aboriginal peoples). The church is intimately caught up in this issue. It is involved in healing and reconciliation projects designed to help restore the relationship between native and non-native. Christianity was intrinsic to the culture of the Europeans who took over North America. We may decry the invaders ways, but we forget many settlers were escaping as bad or worse treatment in Europe.

Residential schools were themselves complex. They were created in part at the request of native leaders and in part by the government to both educate and Europeanize aboriginals. In some circles, this is now considered a crime, but was it? Aboriginal life has been Disneyfied to the extent facts are forgotten: living a hunter-gatherer existence is not romantic. It's not so much living in harmony with nature as trying to survive nature's brutality.

Physical and sexual abuse are utterly indefensible and wrong. There is no question that they happened frequently and with terrible results. As a nation, for permitting those crimes to take place, we have to hang our heads in shame: the lives of many were irreversibly damaged, sometimes wholly wrecked.

On top of that, the reserve system is a disaster. It is impossible to provide a community of a few hundred people living in some remote part of the country the same services those of us in the highly populated south are able to have. In partial compensation, we have treaties enshrining native people with certain rights to live in certain places and in a certain lifestyle. But given how most people on reserves live, this is clearly no just solution.

Complicating this is that we (southern Canadians) often speak as if our native brothers and sisters were not in the same room. They may not be, but they are in the same house looking in on our affluent culture via television and Internet. What is the right ordering of all these complex parts? What might justice for natives look like?

Finally, we can report that sexual assault charges against Dr. Bob Fourney have been dropped. Dr. Fourney not only graciously endured the publicity and the inability to function in the church for a year but, as soon as the charges were dismissed, he was immediately promoting the new *Leading with Care* protocol as strategy in preventing possible abuse and future injustices. Sometimes the right ordering of the parts comes with a high cost.

David Harris

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On the cover:
Sculpture by James Paterson titled *He Breathed His Last.*

Print this

Re. your new policy of making many of the People and Places photos only available at your website and not in the printed magazine. I think this is a misguided policy. I know that this is an important section for many readers. Many people find it difficult to sit and read a magazine or other things of this length on the Web. Others (thinking of retirement home residents, for example, or those with limited economic means who do not have the Web at home or those who do not have it by choice) may not have access to look at this on the Web. This is a section of the magazine that helps keep them in touch with friends and acquaintances.

The *Record* is a tool that we use for outreach and have some copies available for viewing around church buildings.

David Farris
Ottawa

Not funny

I was disappointed with Phil Callaway's A Fork In The Road. It perpetuates the stereotype of desperate housewives and raises the specter of violence with the inclusion of spanking in the daily routine. Hitting children, even if they have been ominously "warned" by a mother clearly on the edge, is not funny.

John Barrett Maroney
Dresden, Ont.

Phil Callaway responds: The child who was "hit" in all this "violence" by a "desperate housewife... clearly on the edge" is now 19 and on his way to Uganda to minister to street children, something he's wanted to do for years. As for the mother, she's on her knees daily for her three children and has made me the happiest man alive during 23 years of marriage.

I wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed Phil Callaway in November. I'm a stay-at-home Mom and often feel that society doesn't appreciate what I do and why I stay home to raise my child. Thanks for the wonderful article and I'll be keeping it for times when I need a lift and encouragement.

Lori Longtin
via email

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Slaveholding Presbyterians

Re. The End Of Slavery letter, October

James MacGregor, an Antiburgher Seceder missionary from Scotland, who in 1788 published a pamphlet against another Presbyterian minister in Nova Scotia who held slaves, began the abolitionist movement in Canada. Slaveholding was routine among Protestant ministers—Church of Engand, Congregationalist and Presbyterian—but not Methodist or New Lights (primitive Baptists). The Presbyterian minister who was the focus of MacGregor's polemic, Daniel Cock, was a Burgher Seceder from Scotland whose flock included Scots-Irish from New Hampshire who had brought their slaves with them to Nova Scotia.

Historian Alan Wilson, formerly of Trent University, has just completed the first modern book-length study of James MacGregor.

Barry Cahill
Halifax

Faith and Spirituality

I found the responses to Andrew Faiz's column interesting (November). Sunday worship is an expression of our spirituality; not spirituality. In fact, it is a ritual based on culture and tradition. A ritual, like the proverbial cat, can be devoid of substance or it can be deeply spiritual and meaningful. It depends what a person puts into worship.

The responses reminded me of an incident in India. Soon after I began my work in Punjab under the PCC some 40 years back, I started visiting Christian families in remote villages. These families were converted during what is known as The Mass Movement (1880s-1930s). Virtually all the conversions were from the dalit (untouchable and outcast castes) community. The conversion wave was monumental. The church did not have the means to deal with this influx. As a result, after the conversion these Christians were left on their own devices—without any pastoral support or contacts with the larger world.

Once I went to visit a man in his 60s. He lived in a one-room mud hut. He told me that he was a young boy when his father was converted from the lowest of the low castes, called the Churas. After conversion, the father was given a Bible. But no one in the family could read. Every morning, after a dip in the village pond the family would open the Bible and sit around it. They would put their hands on it and pray. They would then move their hands from the Bible and touch their foreheads. This was their worship. Some people might call it idolatry. To me it was the most profound expression of faith and spirituality.

Clarence McMullen
via email

Another way of sharing

I must share an enjoyable, and uplifting, experience our congregation had with Richard Schwartz. (Letter From Away, December)

On Presbyterians Sharing... Sunday, we telephoned Nepal during the morning worship. The conversation was fed through our speaker system so the congregation heard the conversation.

Richard told us of his work, touched

BOOKS ON THE REBOUND
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briefly on the Nepalese troubles and related how one of his recovering patients now works in the hospital and has come into the faith.

The call cost a total of $81.00! Presbyterians Sharing... givings the following month were double that of any other month this year!

We would recommend this innovative way of talking to one of our overseas workers to every congregation.

Ian Dudgeon
Cambridge, Ont.

Respect is love

Many thanks to Erin Walton's Called to Wonder, December. Along with Christmas were also Hanukkah and Ramadan and the statement, "It is important for us to respect others."

Respect is one of the most important words for us to learn as Christians of the 21st century. It is a way of expressing our love for others.

Dr. David W. Roe
Aurora, Ont.

The King St. beauty

I enjoyed greatly the article by Brian Stewart on St. Andrew's, King St., Toronto. While a student at Knox College, 1954-57, this was the church that I usually attended. It helped me to learn the importance of beauty in architecture, worship, music and liturgy.

Rev. James Weir
Kincardine Ont.

Working without Oprah

Thank you, Michael Coren for so accurately putting into words the thoughts I experience each time we are exposed to The Oprah Syndrome. Often those same people who so willingly subscribe and share the spiritual medicine dispensed by pop icons and television hosts are the ones who dismiss or are cynical of the daily acts of kindness and love performed by those less glamourous people of faith working tirelessly in their own backyards, whether they be local clergy, friends or neighbours.

Keri J. Ferguson
St. Marys, Ontario

Hangin' Out

I enjoyed the December editorial and the excerpt from Brian Stewart about St. Andrew's anniversary and the reactions to C. S. Lewis.

However, for me, Andrew Faiz said it so well; and I don't like the Christmas season either. His words were as truthful as those of the child who cried out, "But the Emperor has no clothes on!".

I'm with you, Andrew. I'll be hanging out with the ones I love and taking time out to think about that kid born in that barn, so help me God.

Rev. Marion Schaffer
via email

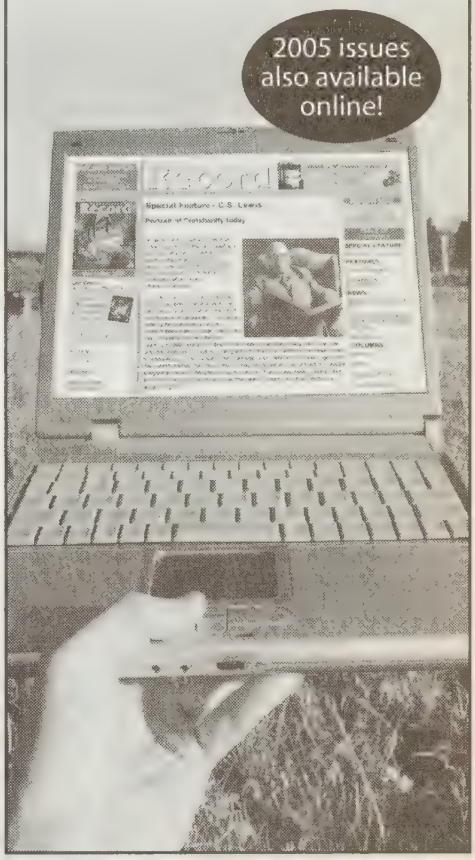
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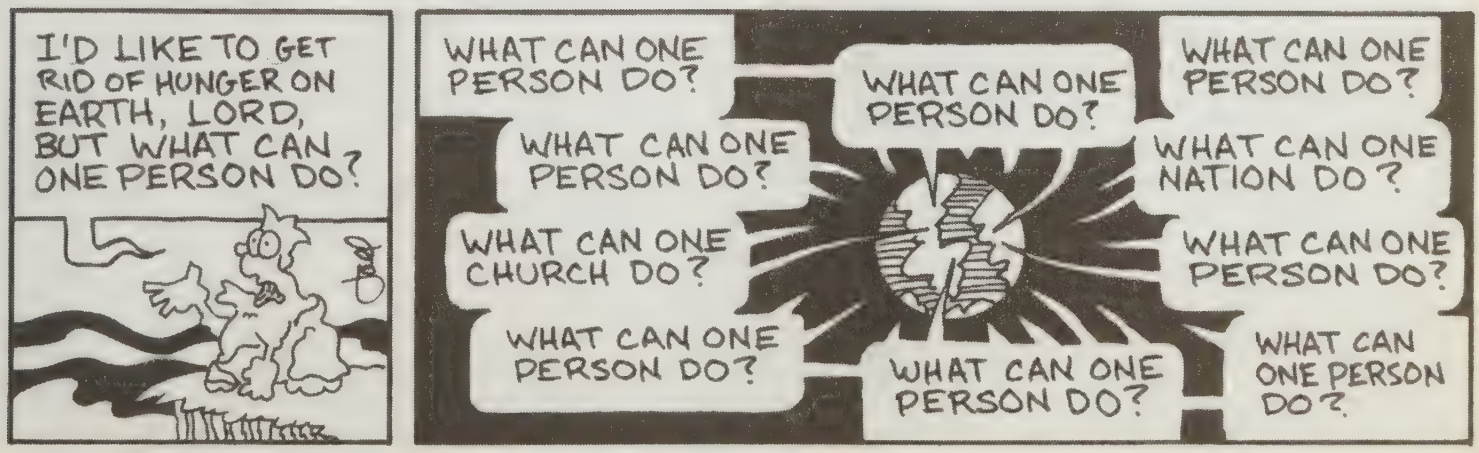
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Pontius' Puddle





What's that old line about those who play together, stay together? The St. Matthew's Flames from Ingleside, Ont., played in the Can-Am pond hockey tournament this year in Ingleside. All managed to regroup to go to church on Sunday with many sore bones. From left, front, Jim Duck (choir member), Bill MacDonald (board of managers), Reid McIntyre (clerk of session), Albert DeRoy (board of managers). Back row, Pastor David Skinner (lay missionary) and Hienie Brunning (member).



You're looking at a combined 259 years of service to St. Andrew's, Perth, Ont., and to the church at large. Over the past few years these stalwart gentlemen have chosen to move on, allowing others to feel the thrills and spills of Session meetings. Bob Scott, far right, still remains as clerk of session, having first been ordained elder in 1956. He and Rev. Marilyn Savage bid farewell and a hearty thanks to Ron Packman, who served for 22 years, Rom Bramhall, 14 years, Jack Duncan, 21 years, Ivan Bird, 37 years, Doug Cavers, 47 years, and Don Oliver, 46 years. Missing from the photograph because he was hospitalized is Russ Bradford, who served 22 years.

HAD CAKE LATELY? Share your celebrations with the rest of the Church. Send your stories to PnP@presbyterianrecord.ca along with your digital photographs, 300 dpi minimum, high quality JPEGs. Or mail the photographs to: The Record, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, M3C 1J7.

To be considered for People and Places, photographs should be sharp and everyone clearly identified. The Record reserves the right to reject any photos not of sufficient quality. Group photographs reproduce poorly and can rarely be used. Photographs cannot be returned.

For more People & Places submissions please visit our website: www.presbyterianrecord.ca



Ethel McHarg, 101, was the eldest of 13 children and was born in a small village north of Fergus, Ont. The youngest, an invalid sister, aged 74, lives in Simcoe. The other 11 are deceased. Ethel joined St. Andrew's–Knox, Fort Erie, Ont., in 1952 and has been involved in the choir, in teaching Sunday school and in the women's work in the church. Until two years ago she maintained a group of women who knit for the Church Christmas bazaar and for community organizations. She continues to knit infant outfits for needy families, even doing so during her recent hospital stay. She remains a faithful supporter of the *Record*. She is seen here on her centennial with her baby brother, Don Mason, then 75, who passed away in June, and Mayor Wayne Redekop, who presented her with a Town of Fort Erie commendation. She also received a certificate from Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. Her husband Andy passed away 20 years ago.





Al and Win Wilson were the first to have a wedding reception in Taylor Hall, a brand new addition to St. John's, Medicine Hat, Alta., in 1955. Al has been an elder there since 1959. On May 1st last year they counted up a half-century, a rare anniversary. Rare in society perhaps, but not amongst faithful Presbyterians.



First, Prince Rupert, B.C., Sunday School students are joining Hannah Taylor's Ladybug Foundation Team to fight homelessness. Ladybug jars will be taking flight and settling in for a few weeks at local businesses. Hannah, a nine-year-old girl from Winnipeg, Man., started the Ladybug Foundation three years ago. She has raised over $400,000 and more importantly is changing how people view and treat homelessness. The Ladybug Foundation motto is Make Change. Hannah has met with many different businesses, students, entertainers and government officials to help fight homelessness in Canada. Hannah and her mom have,via e-mail, personally thanked the First Presbyterian students "for caring and for helping" and said it makes her heart feel so happy. Money collected is earmarked for The Vivian, a housing project for women, in Vancouver. Read more about Hannah's amazing story and inspiring foundation at ladybugfoundation.ca. PHOTO: CHANTAL CORNWALL

Searching for the real thing

It's all about moral choices, and moral choices require their own moral choices

BY ANDREW FAIZ

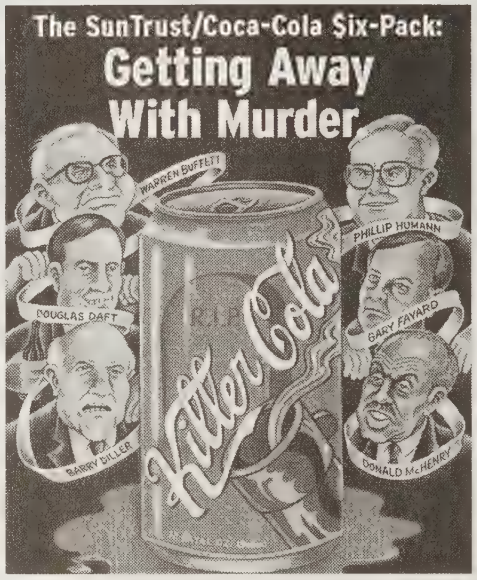
The richest person on earth cannot get a better Coca-Cola than the poorest. Unlike wine, whiskey, beer and even water, there is only one Coke for all. Coke is a purely democratic beverage, finding no barrier of access or taste. And there is no variance in the taste—the Coke I bought in Egypt tastes exactly like the ones I had in Belgium and in Pakistan.

It is a most resilient drink, as good in winter as it is in summer. And, it's a great mixer, as a few of you might have heard. I am told it goes well with white rum. At the Cairo Hilton I saw local 20-somethings mix it with whiskey (Johnnie Walker Red, the scotch of the emerging world), which struck me as just wrong.

The company that produces this wondrous drink, however, is not without allegations. The website killercoke.org is one of many to list The Coca-Cola Company's sins: Environmental damage in India, union resistance in Colombia. Screaming accusations of management approved murders. And, of course, the myriad forms of cultural and economic imperialism associated with any multinational corporation.

Naturally, the company does not agree. On cokefacts.org they refute many of these arguments. I'm certain that both the accusations and the defense conveniently skirt salient details, but that doesn't make either inaccurate. Coca-Cola could, arguably, cause some environmental impact; while at the same time provide some economic stimulus. The sin is in the eye of the beholder.

You might buy your beverage at Wal-Mart, which, like Coca-Cola, is one of the most powerful corporations on the planet. There are 5,000 stores in 10 countries; five per cent of all trade between



Cover of online brochure from www.killercoke.org.

the United States and China is through this one corporation. Walmartwatch.com has a list of the company's sins—from union bashing (well documented) to political manipulation. In choosing what products, particularly cultural products, sit on its shelves, Wal-Mart can curtail or promote certain ideas, whether about politics, religion or sexuality. And, since the company does offer the lowest prices, local businesses, often mom-and-pop operations, cannot compete. The consumer might win, but often she's the only one.

It's all about moral choices and, often, moral choices require their own moral choices. Aren't low prices, allowing for an economic democracy, a worthy goal unto themselves? Must a corporation that provides this general access also be union-friendly? What if a unionized shop raises the product prices? The worker might win, but does the consumer? What is the greater good? Should the question be better good? Or is this a false argument?

There are fashions to moral choices, of course. Last few years it has been Chilean sea bass (verge of extinction from ill considered fishing practices) and multinational pharmaceuticals; two decades ago it was South African wines (as a protest to apartheid); the grand daddy of them all was California grapes, in protest over migrant worker issues. Strict vegans don't wear leather since it offends their moral beliefs; those who choose to wear fur offend many others. Others like leather car seats and home furnishings. There are some, I'm told, who hate television, believing it to be the scourge of our age. I, for one, believe great works of art are currently being produced for television.

Or, is this the sort of argument that just keeps us from getting on with our lives? I mean, a Coke! It's just a Coke! If we were to stop at that, then what else? Clothes? Well, perhaps; check the label: chances are they were made in a sweatshop, perhaps with child labour, in a developing nation like Bangladesh. Shoes? Yes, you know better than that. A steak? Use of steroids, treatment of animals, butchering practices, genetic modification, fattening pens, mass farming practices, soil degradation, ad-nauseum. Water? Half the planet doesn't have any that's potable, and in Canada, we waste ours by charging too little for corporate use, by not protecting our aquifers, by not maintaining remote treatment plants—generally by not treating it as the precious resource it is. And, then, there's the cynical consumerism of buying it in bottled form—with one of the most successful bottlers being the Coca-Cola Company—in plastic containers.

Andrew Faiz is a writer, producer and filmmaker. He is also managing editor of the *Record*. You can reach him at mngeditor@presbyterianrecord.ca.



PHOTO: DAVID HARRIS

Rev. Duncan Cameron, Rev. Bill Klempa and Rev. Stuart Coles sing one of Mr. Coles' hymns at the 50th anniversary celebration of the Declaration of Faith Concerning Church and Nation. Mr. Coles served on the committee that drafted the historic document.

Donate online

It is now possible to donate online to the work of Presbyterian World Service and Development and Presbyterians Sharing. The new feature is in response to the strong demand from Presbyterians to be able to respond immediately to natural disasters. Visit www.presbyterian.ca and click on the 'Donate' icon to get started. – *AM*

Moderator nominees

The nominees for Moderator of the 2006 General Assembly are Wilma Welsh, an elder at Knox, Guelph, and Les Young, an elder at Westmount, Edmonton. The Committee to Advise the Moderator will count ballots on April 3 and the chosen nominee will be inducted at assembly, held this year in St. Catharine's, Ont. Watch for nominee profiles in the *Record's* February issue.

Historic document defined relationship between church and state

The church doctrine committee celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Faith Concerning Church and Nation recently while meeting at the national office. Adopted in 1955, the declaration says the church must denounce and resist all forms of tyranny. It also says that church and state are intimately related.

"Each is bound to aid the other according to its appointed power and functions, but neither is given any right thereby to attempt domination over the other," states the document. "We reject any doctrine which misconceives the Church as the religious agent of the State. We reject any doctrine which misconceives the State as the political instrument of the Church."

Rev. Stuart Coles, who served on the committee all five years of its development, was at the celebration. He urged the current committee (the church's "thinkers") to work with the social action "doers of our faith," when trying to solve today's challenges. "Our confession of faith does not belong in the attic, but is something to be done daily."

Coles said the church needs to bring its thinking into the present age. "We moved the clock forward from 1647, when the Westminster Confession was written, to 1950. How do we move it forward today?"

He would like to see a new document that addresses contemporary issues—particularly challenges surrounding money, finances and ethical investing, remarking that the dollar too often reigns supreme. – *AM*

Reformed churches refocus joint work

Kendall to chair finance, fundraising committee

The World Alliance of Reformed Churches has restructured itself in hopes of avoiding financial difficulties and increasing access to church members throughout the world.

The WARC executive committee met in Evian, France in October to discuss these issues, and to further deliberate global economic justice and specifically, the right to water. The meeting was a follow-up to the General Council meeting held in Accra, Ghana in the summer of 2004.

The council trimmed its Geneva office from 11 to 10 and developed a new funding model to facilitate its programs. The core funding budget takes care of the council's priorities, while the enhancing budget is used if available and exists only through donations and fundraising.

In the past, WARC relied heavily on donations from member churches, of which the Presbyterian Church is one. Many of these churches, however, have had changes to their government funding, resulting in financial shortfalls of their own.

A sluggish economy in Germany, for example, has hit the Evangelical Church in Germany, an umbrella organization for the country's 25 million Protestants.



Worshippers dance during an outdoor service in downtown Accra, Ghana, at the 24th General Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, in 2004.



Kendall

To facilitate WARC's new priorities of involving congregations in its work, the executive established eight networks of WARC members from around the world. The Presbyterian Church's principal clerk, Rev. Stephen Kendall, is convener of the fundraising and finance network. The other networks deal with covenanting for justice in the economy and the earth, communion and unity within the church, reinterpreting the Reformed tradition for contemporary witness and spiritual renewal, fostering mission in unity, mission renewal and mission empowerment, gender justice, youth and communications.

"We're worried that churches don't know very much about WARC," said Kendall. "This is a way to extend WARC into congregations."

Churches are responsible for nominating people to the networks. *Record* editor David Harris, who attended the WARC conference in Ghana, has been nominated to the communications network. The church is also supporting WARC's Mission in Unity project through international ministries and last year's General Assembly adopted a document on the right to water and the effects of globalization—something WARC is devoted to improving. The document is now being studied by the ecumenical and international relations committee, with further recommendations possible for this year's assembly.

Kendall said the council's new initiatives are a great way to show Presbyterians how they're linked with others. "There are so many different cultures that can be represented within our own family," he said. "I think congregations are glad to know there are Presbyterians with whom they share something in common in so many different parts of the world."

WARC is a fellowship of 75 million Reformed Christians in 218 churches in 107 countries. Its member churches are Congregational, Presbyterian, Reformed and United.

WARC has also awarded 11 women from Africa with scholarships worth nearly $64,000 in its ongoing effort to make theological education more accessible to women. WARC launched its Theological Education Scholarship for Women in the South in 2001 for women who would otherwise be denied their call to ministry. – *AM with files from ENI*

PHOTOS: DAVID HARRIS

Court drops all charges against Toronto Presbyterian minister

Congregation erupts in 'spontaneous applause'

BY AMY MACLACHLAN

An Ontario judge has dismissed two charges of sex crimes against Rev. Robert Fourney, senior minister at Glenview Presbyterian Church, Toronto. Fourney was charged with sexual assault and sexual exploitation of a male teenager last January – an allegation dating back to 1990 when he was minister at St. Andrew's, Windsor.

Fourney pleaded not guilty to the charges on Nov. 18 in Owen Sound court. But the judge dismissed the charges when the Crown elected to call no evidence. According to the news release from Glenview, the Crown determined the evidence did not support the charges and made a decision not to proceed. "This has been a terrible ordeal, but I've been supported by family and friends," Fourney told the *Record*. "That's what carries you through any kind of tragic experience. When all the trappings of the world come tumbling down, you look at yourself and ask where God is in your life. My faith has grown, and I think I'm a better minister because of it."

'God is in a letter, in a phone call and in the kindness and response of others. When there's pain, God is not absent, he's very much present'

Fourney, who was one of the nominees for moderator of the 2003 General Assembly, has maintained his innocence throughout the process. "Even during the worst of times, God is there through the presence of others," he said. "You don't need miracles to see God is there. He's in a letter, in a phone call and in the kindness and response of others. When there's pain, God is not absent, he's very much present."

As required by church policy, Fourney was put on a paid leave of absence by the Presbytery of East Toronto after being charged in January. Presbytery must conduct its own investigation. The sexual harassment and abuse committee of presbytery met Nov. 22. Rev. Jim Biggs, presbytery clerk, said the committee is expected to present its report at the Jan. 10 presbytery meeting.

"We hope for a speedy resolution on their part," said David McIntyre, Glenview's clerk of session. To assist the presbytery in its review, the congregation of Glenview discussed the situation at a special meeting in December. Fourney cannot return to his ministry at Glenview until the investigation is finished. Rev. Harrold Morris and Rev. Don Pollock remain as the interim ministers.

McIntyre said when he announced the good news to the congregation, there was "spontaneous and enthusiastic applause." "It was greeted with excitement," he said. A formal letter explaining the situation was sent to members.

Fourney said in a press release that this experience has only reinforced the importance of the church's newly approved *Leading with Care* volunteer screening and ministry protocol policy. "As ministers, we may find ourselves in vulnerable situations as we carry out our ministry of pastoral care and ministry to youth. This is why *Leading with Care* is such an important document as it not only protects children, youth and those most vulnerable, but provides guidance for those in leadership positions."

Fourney is past moderator of East Toronto Presbytery. He is married with two grown children.

Church supports federal native settlement

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH welcomed a federal announcement in late November to establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which will be guided by principles established by a 1998-99 working group that explored the issue, and a financial package that will give $10,000 to every former student of Indian residential schools and an additional $3,000 for each year of attendance after the first. The deal was part of a series of initiatives to address the need for compensation and resolution in a comprehensive, fair and just manner.

The Presbyterian Church, along with the United and Anglican Churches and 41 Roman Catholic bodies, signed the agreement in principle, along with the Assembly of First Nations, former students and the federal government.

"The announced Truth and Reconciliation Commission has the potential to be a powerful public way of dealing with the truth by hearing directly from those affected by the legacy of residential schools. The Presbyterian Church looks forward to sharing in this process," said Rev. Stephen Kendall, principal clerk, in a news release.

The original Truth and Reconciliation Commission was assembled in South Africa in 1995, following the end of apartheid. The commission was mandated to bear witness to and record victim stories.

In addition to the $1.9 billion for former students, the agreement permits former students who are now 65 or older to apply for an advance payment of $8,000. It also says $125 million will be added to the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, an additional $10 million invested in the existing commemoration program and $60 million given to the truth and reconciliation process.

The 2003 settlement with the federal government limited the Presbyterian Church's liability to $2.1 million and said all denominations will be treated equally. The Anglican Church has said a recent agreement with the Roman Catholics is more favourable than the one they agreed to in 2002 and has notified the federal government that it is invoking the clause to have the same terms. The PCC will begin its re-negotiation process shortly. -- *AM*

Malawi's starving millions

Pressure mounts to create constitutional right to food

It's a concept that's hard for Canadians to fathom, but in Malawi, where up to half the country's 12 million people don't have enough to eat, having the right to food enshrined in the constitution would be a major step forward.

Several NGOs in the south African country are advocating for the stipulation to be enshrined in Malawi's constitution by the fall of 2006. The bill would help ensure access to food for the entire population by committing the government to act responsibly and in the population's best interest.

"It will be legally binding," said Mildred Sharra, a member of the taskforce on the Right to Food and project officer with Malawi's Centre for Human Rights and Rehabilitation. "It's about the government fulfilling, respecting and protecting the right to food."

The project is supported by Presbyterian World Service & Development through the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian. The taskforce was created by the society to help push ahead the right to food legislation.



Mildred Sharra works to secure the right to food for people in Malawi through the Centre for Human Rights and Rehabilitation

Food shortages in Malawi have been ongoing for years thanks to flooding as well as government decisions that made the situation worse. In late 2001, almost all of Malawi's grain reserve was sold—a decision made by then-president Bakili Muluzi despite early warnings that a shortage was coming. Advice to sell reportedly came from donor agencies led by the International Monetary Fund, according to CHRR's 2003-04 annual report.

It was soon noted that a transparent grain reserve that ensures an adequate supply of grain throughout the year is needed, as well as greater freedom of the Malawian government to make its own decisions regarding food security and trade policies. "If the government is going to set priorities, this has to be one of them," said Sharra, during a recent visit to Canada.

Current president Bingu wa Mutharika, elected in 2004, is committed to his anticorruption campaign, hoping to stimulate investment in the country. The task force is hoping this focus will bode well for the bill's adoption.

The bill was created through extensive consultations with locals and civil society. The next step is sharing the finished product with Malawians. "People need to own the bill," said Sharra. "If it's coming from the grassroots up, there will be more of a human rights emphasis."

The bill has three parts. The first outlines the obligations, duties and responsibilities for government and stakeholders in securing the right to food. The second details the need for transparency, helping to curtail the abuse of funds and resources, and the third provides for the creation of a national food security agency, which will monitor progress and help implement the bill's stipulations.

"We hope the government can be taken to task, and we hope citizens can take up their responsibilities as well," she said. "Citizens need to make a commitment to provide food for themselves. They have to ask, 'What choices can I make to not violate my family's right to food?'"

Despite her hopefulness, Sharra realizes this groundbreaking bill—something that hasn't been introduced in any other country—may not reach its goal. "If it's not adopted, I won't call it a failure. It has increased sensitization; people are being informed of their rights and it is changing mindsets. And hopefully it has impacted the way decisions are made in the future."

In a country where 70 per cent of the population is poor and don't even know what human rights are, raising awareness is an important step. "If you remove human rights, what do they have?" asked Sharra.

No subsidies are currently given to help farmers work the land. Sharra said the government has to accept a responsibility to offer subsidies when needed, ensure farmers have access to equipment, and are able to own their land—a rare occurrence in Malawi. She said cultural practices also have to change, such as women doing the bulk of the farming. She said men have to start pulling their own weight, helping to ensure their family's right to food.

"Malawi is in a vulnerable situation right now," she said. "This bill should be one of its priorities; to provide food to its citizens."– *AM*

Uplifting and fulfilling

The new general secretary of the life and mission agency says communication is at the heart of the agency's work. "We have to put out a message that is uplifting, fulfilling and gospel-based, but do so with images that appeal. We have to be careful not to turn off very faithful members, but present the Presbyterian Church to the next generation," said Rev. Rick Fee.

The agency held its annual meeting Nov. 7-9. Among issues discussed were:

• New terms of reference for the Dr. E.H. Johnson Memorial Fund, established in 1982 to honour outstanding contribution to world mission, were adopted. Strengthening of the relationship between the LMA and the E.H. Johnson committee was a main concern, ensuring that the program of the E.H. Johnson Fund is complementary to the mission of the church. Terms of service on the committee were clarified. Twelve members will be named to the committee – six chosen by the committee, three chosen by the LMA and three will be ex-officio voting members. They will sit for a three-year term. A recommitment was made to the fund's short-term exchange program, something that was somewhat forgotten. The program enables Presbyterian lay persons and clergy to exchange time with people in partner churches.

• Responding to a request from General Assembly to consider more funding for native ministries, Canada Ministries said this already ranks second in program funding. Gordon Haynes, associate secretary for Canada Ministries, said unless givings to Presbyterians Sharing increases, the department is unable to devote more monies to native ministries (without taking money from existing programs or limiting the support of new ministries).

• Web traffic to the church's website has been steadily increasing since it was launched 10 years ago, when it attracted less than 500 visitors for the entire year. Today, the site averages almost 2,500 visitors each day, making it a primary resource centre for the church.

• Rev. Uma Onwunta, a former principal clerk of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, was in Canada to interview missionaries and conduct research for his doctoral thesis. Sponsored in part by the Presbyterian Church, he is studying theology in South Africa. "Mission is not so much about answering questions as it is about asking questions," said Onwunta. Despite Africa's problems, he said, Christianity is flourishing. "The mission into which we are called is a journey we need to take seriously. We need to ask questions about who we are, what we are doing, about our neighbour, about our friend. How are we making a difference in people's lives?"

• Of healing and reconciliation Rev. Jean Morris said, "There is fertile soil for discussion and what possibilities there are for people to help," she said. "It's on their hearts and minds."
She also mentioned the disconnect she senses between the people in the pews and church offices. "What can we do to minimize that disconnect?" she asked. She sees people struggling faithfully to find ways to connect with mission and evangelism. She noted that PWS&D is one of the main ways parishioners feel connected to one another.
Morris also spoke of the need to value seniors in the church. "We are often embarrassed by the age of our church," she said. "It distresses me." She said the greatest number of volunteer hours in Canada comes from seniors. "Is the church being a good steward of that resource?"

• Rev. Joe Reed, who stepped down from his post of 20 years as area liaison in Central America, received a moment of appreciation during the meeting. Several committee members expressed their gratitude for his dedicated service, recalled poignant moments they have shared with him, and wished him well in his future endeavours. – *AM*

Assembly Council discusses prophetic role

THE ISSUE OF how to set professors' salaries was back on the front burner at November's Assembly Council meeting.

General Assembly was unhappy with council's handling of executive staff pay increases and, while approving the new pay scale, sent the policy on establishing remuneration back to council for revisions.

Assembly was mainly concerned with the process of setting professors' stipends, and the lack of consultation with the colleges and the Committee on Theological Education. Professors' stipends have been linked with executive levels in the past. A working group was established by the council to revise the policy, with benchmarks for professors' pay, in consultation with the appropriate groups. Any changes are expected at the 2006 assembly.

An overture from assembly regarding the "prophetic role" of the council in setting church policies was also discussed. Council presented three possible responses to this overture, asking only for feedback before continuing its work. Council affirmed it wants to be prophetic, because it is biblical language and emphasizes that council seeks to be guided by God's will. Rev. Jonathan Dent said although he agrees with this prophetic role, the response should make it clear that the council is simply "a group of regular Presbyterians" and not "some sort of elite body" whose decisions are without error.

The Long Range Planning Team concluded its work on preparation for a Sabbath year, beginning in Advent 2007. A presentation is in the works and will soon be sent to congregations. It will help guide congregations through the next two years, giving them information and ideas on how to observe the Sabbath year.

The Health and Dental Reserve Fund Policy was approved. Anticipating substantial raises in insurance premiums over the next several years, the finance committee will cover such increases using the current excesses of the policy's reserve fund. This move will protect staff from premium hikes over the next six years. – *AM*

Bishop pleads for kidnap victims

(ENI)—Bishop Munib Younan, a Palestinian Lutheran bishop for the Holy Land, issued a plea after four members of the pacifist group Christian Peacemaker Teams were abducted by an Iraqi insurgent group calling itself the Swords of Righteousness brigades. He urged the kidnappers to show mercy, saying they belong to a group working for peace and to alleviate the suffering of Palestinians in areas under Israeli occupation.

The bishop said Christian Peacemaker Team members were people of peace who had stood firm with the Palestinians in the face of Israeli occupation.

Papal indulgences nailed by Italian Protestant

(ENI)—A top Italian Protestant has accused Pope Benedict XVI of setting back Christian unity by granting indulgences to Roman Catholics who carry out acts of devotion to the Virgin Mary to mark the 40th anniversary of the end of the Second Vatican Council.

"The Catholic Church is free to decree all the indulgences it likes but stressing the things that divide [churches] crushes the hopes of those who are working for Christian unity," said Professor Paolo Ricca of the Protestant Waldensian theology faculty in Rome.

Catholic theology offers the remission of punishment for sins, but Ricca noted, the granting of indulgences was one of the issues that unleashed the 16th century Protestant Reformation of German monk Martin Luther.

Pope Benedict after his election in April said his "primary task" would be to promote the unity of all Christians.

In August Pope Benedict granted indulgences to participants in the World Youth Days in Cologne in Germany, irking the country's Protestant churches.

The issue of indulgences was a major reason for Martin Luther's bid to reform the Church in the 16th century. Luther criticised the practice in his 95 Theses which were posted in Wittenberg on Oct. 31, 1517.

Queen extols Christianity

(ENI)—Queen Elizabeth II extolled the unique role of the Christian Church in the search for meaning in the modern world when she opened the (Anglican) Church of England's general synod in London.

The 79-year-old monarch, speaking in her role as the Church of England's supreme governor, gave a robust reaffirmation of her faith to some 450 bishops, clergy and laity attending the two-day session of the denomination's parliament, in its first meeting of a five-year term.

"When so much is in flux, when limitless amounts of information, much of it ephemeral are instantly accessible, there is renewed hunger for that which endures and gives meaning," She stated at the opening of the synod. "The Christian church can speak uniquely to that need, for at the heart of our faith stands the conviction that all people, irrespective of race, background or circumstance, can find lasting significance and purpose in the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

HIV/AIDS has touched his family, says Kobia

(ENI)—World Council of Churches general secretary Rev. Samuel Kobia has told a gathering in front of the Swiss parliament that the deaths of close relatives due to HIV/AIDS has impelled him to speak out on the pandemic.

And he noted that a major difficulty for churches in dealing with the pandemic has been an inability to address sexuality in an open way.

"Within a short span of two years, I have lost a brother, two nieces, a nephew, a sister and brother-in-law, and four cousins," Kobia, a Methodist from Kenya, said at an event to mark World Aids Day being organized by Swiss churches in Bern.

"However this epidemic goes way beyond any personal tragedy," noted Kobia. "It has made my consciousness more sensitive to the vulnerabilities and strengths of societies."

The number of people living with HIV globally is at its highest level with an estimated 40.3 million people, up from an estimated 37.5 million in 2003. More than three million people died of AIDS-related illnesses in 2005; of these, more than 500 000 were children.

Anti-gay pastor acquitted

(ENI)—Sweden's supreme court has acquitted pastor Ake Green of engaging in a hate speech against homosexuals, made in a sermon in 2003. Green described homosexuality as "abnormal, a horrible tumour in the body of society" and he said homosexual are "perverts, whose sexual drive the Devil has used as his strongest weapon against God". The supreme court noted in its verdict that Green's statements were made during a sermon, in a religious community and were based on a theme in the Bible. It said the sermon was protected by freedom of speech and religion.

Dismissal angers Catholics

The Catholic Church is out of step with women's rights in today's world and as a result women are being denied social justice and their rights to full and equal participation in the Catholic Church, said the Catholic Network for Women's Equality.

"The recent discipline of Rev. Ed Cachia by the Catholic bishop of Peterborough, Ont., Nicola de Angelis, is contrary to the church's own teaching on social justice because the church has not acted justly in its treatment of Rev. Cachia or in providing adequate economic support for him," said Mary Ann Beavis, CNWE spokesperson.

Cachia, former associate pastor at St. Michaels' Parish in Cobourg, Ont., was relieved of his duties in late October for publicly supporting women's ordination. He was dismissed with two month's wages and no pension plan.

"The Peterborough diocese must practice what it preaches and take responsibility for fair and humane treatment of its workers," said Beavis, a professor of biblical studies. "It must allow people the freedom to speak the truth of their conscience and restore Fr. Cachia to active ministry."

– Canada NewsWire

God's saving grace

Ethiopian woman finds faith and healing after years of wrongful imprisonment

BY AMY MACLACHLAN

Torture. Persecution. Imprisonment. Fleeing for your life. Most people won't experience any of these things during their lifetime. Martha Kuwee Kumsa experienced them all. She now accepts her struggles and recognizes how the perilous road of her past has shaped her identity. "The principles and values I learned during childhood, and from my family, my faith, from Marxism and animism have harmonized in a very nice way to make me who I am," she said. "I'm a life in process."

Kumsa comes from the Oromo region of Ethiopia—a western part of the province often plagued by oppression. Thanks to American Presbyterian missionaries, her maternal grandfather was one of the first Presbyterian ministers ordained in the area. Her father was also ordained and when it came time for Kumsa to marry, it was the son of a Presbyterian minister who won her heart. "I was a very strong believer and grew up in a very devoted Presbyterian family," she said.

Even so, Kumsa eventually strayed from the faith she had grown up with—influenced by Ethiopia's political situation that was moving from centuries of empirical rule to a communist regime. "There was revolution in the air," she said. "It was in the air I breathed, in the food I ate, and I bought into it. I became a student activist in university."

Her activism soon led to her persecution. Such treatment wasn't foreign to Kumsa. She had watched her grandfather and father come under fire for their religious beliefs. With Ethiopia being a strongly Orthodox Christian country, the growth of Protestant churches imported by missionaries was despised. "The state was autocratic. Orthodox Christianity was the official religion. They viewed anything that came from outside with suspicion."

As the communist government seized control, the crackdown continued. "My father was headstrong. They burned his Bibles and took away his church. But he refused to be stopped. They put him in jail, and he preached in jail. He took his faith wherever he went. They couldn't stop him."

Kumsa had been a print and radio journalist, and wrote often about the oppression of her people. In January 1980, at the age of 24, Kumsa was taken to prison—with no explanation. She left three toddlers behind. Her husband had disappeared more than a year before. "There was no charge at all," she said. "No sentence. Nothing."

Kumsa wouldn't step outside the prison walls for 10 years. She said the most independent minds were put in jail; perhaps to curtail the Oromo uprising that was beginning at the time of her imprisonment.

A group of prisoners got together and started teaching those who were less educated. "It was a stressful situation," she said. "You never knew if your name was going to be called out and you'd be killed. You couldn't just sit there and go crazy. So we began to teach each other."





'It was a stressful situation. You never knew if your name was going to be called out and you'd be killed. You couldn't just sit there and go crazy. So we began to teach each other'

The "by inmates, for inmates" philosophy worked. For some time, their makeshift school was one of the best in the country. Prison guards and administrators brought their children there in the evenings to be taught.

"It was quite a contradiction. People were being killed and tortured and we were teaching their kids," said Kumsa. "Since the school was in a different building than the torture, it wasn't the same people involved, but they were still organs of the same body. They were there to watch us and then hand us over to security to be investigated."

The trying time left Kumsa physically drained and emotionally exhausted. As visitation was severely restricted—with death threats sometimes uttered if outsiders dared to contact imprisoned relatives—Kumsa felt isolated and alone. She didn't see her children for the first seven years she was behind bars. "I felt cut off from everything; from life itself," she said. "You feel like the world is still turning and no one cares. You're irrelevant."

But Kumsa's spirits were lifted when she began receiving letters from an unknown source. "I thought, 'Oh my God. Somebody knows I'm here.' It was the best message of all. Knowing that somebody believes in me and that I didn't do anything wrong."

While prison was spirit-destroying, the letters were validating and uplifting, and triggered Kumsa's healing process. Gradually, the letters came more frequently and revealed more detail. She eventually discovered that the letters were from an organization called PEN Canada, which campaigns on behalf of writers who are persecuted for expressing their thoughts, and she found out that Amnesty International was looking into her case.

Finally, at the age of 34, Kumsa was released. Her parents took her to church, where she discovered the congregation had been praying for her while she was gone. "Everybody sang a song my grandfather composed in prison," she said. "I stood in front of the congregation and I looked at their faces and they were crying! I looked at the children, and they were crying too. My father and mother were crying. It was a deeply spiritual moment for me, and a moment of reconnecting.

"I realized that all that time in prison, something was passing over me. I was connected to these people or to my God, and something spared me. I thought everyone had forgotten about me, but their prayers were with me through those years. It was a moment of truth."

Although Kumsa is no longer a practicing Christian, she is researching her religious roots and figuring out where she fits. She is currently studying Oromo spirituality of ancient times. "I'm finding a lot of rituals and traditions that harmonize with Christian ideas in a very deep and spiritual way. It's a time of exploration now, and of reclamation."

Kumsa and her children fled to Toronto in 1991. Her husband, Leenco Lata, was a founding member of the Oromo Liberation Front and had fled for his life years before. He was fighting with guerilla soldiers in the bush and hoping to overthrow the military dictatorship of Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam. The couple saw each other briefly in Kenya, on Kumsa's way to Canada. "It was unexpected. There was a lot of anger, and very mixed feelings. I thought he had died, but he was alive and hadn't said a word all these years. There was love and hate. It was a mixture of everything."

Lata finally joined his family in Canada in 1996. The couple moved to Waterloo three years ago, where Kumsa works as a professor of social work at Wilfred Laurier University. Now 50 years old, she is the winner of numerous awards and accolades for her human rights work. Her chosen career in Canada was influenced by her hope to find healing through others. "This is happening for me now," she said, "but I continue to feel the pain of those who are in pain. I'm finding healing to be a very complex and multilayered phenomenon."

Despite all she has been through, Kumsa's Christian roots remain deeply ingrained. "On Sundays you'll hear me sing songs and hymns from my childhood. It's a very integral part of me. I can't throw it out. It's here."

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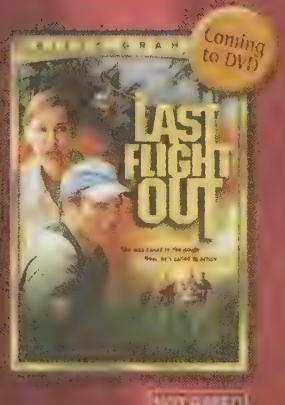


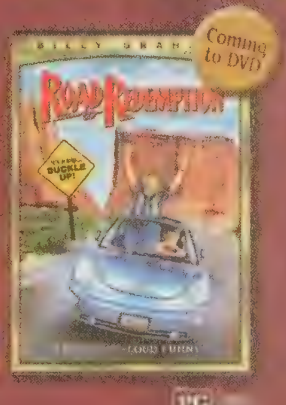
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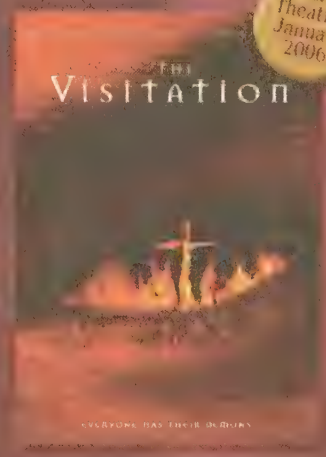
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Is Christ your financial advisor?



Many organizations continue to struggle over their corporate social responsibility

BY AMY MACLACHLAN

As a by-product of corporate disasters such as Enron, consumers care more about where their money is going and what it is supporting—be it donations given to an emergency aid agency or extra income invested in mutual funds. In the church, where ethics take centre stage, wise stewardship of both individual and church-wide resources is a particularly hot issue. Concerns inside and outside the church about corporate performance have spawned the phenomenon of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and ethical or socially responsible investing (SRI)—issues that have their beginnings in the church and continue to grow.

Toby Heaps, editor of *Corporate Knights*, Canada's magazine for business ethics, said the SRI landscape is still evolving. "None of the large, publicly-traded companies are angels," he said. And socially responsible investing often entails simply choosing the companies that aren't quite as bad as their competitors. "It's like Sunchips—you don't get the trans-fats that are in regular chips, but they still aren't that good for you."

Despite increasing calls for corporations to account for their actions and a proliferation of ethical funds available for purchase, the controversies surrounding CSR are numerous and complex. A lack of standardization and government regulation makes ethical investments a challenge for individuals—as well as institutions.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada does not have a specific ethical investing policy. The problem, according to Stephen Roche, the church's chief financial officer, is that investing ethically isn't as black and white as many might think. He said staying away from companies that support typical no-go areas for churches—such as tobacco, alcohol and pornography—is a clear condition that fund managers can easily accommodate. It's when greyer areas of ethics come into play that makes it nearly impossible to devise a cohesive set of standards. "You have to define ethical and then get a majority to agree," Roche said in an interview. "What do 125,000 Presbyterians want?

"We have to balance our fiduciary obligations with what we

see as the clear voice of the church," he continued, "And when the voice isn't clear, then what do you do?"

The Ontario Teacher's Pension Plan Board has voiced similar concerns in the past, worrying that incorporating social factors into their investment decisions could leave them in breach of their government-regulated fiduciary responsibilities—namely to maximize financial returns and minimize risk of loss. Non-financial factors, therefore, will not be considered ahead of "risk and return considerations," according to its policy. However, it does note that corporations can enhance long-term value by considering social responsibility issues.

In 2003, the General Assembly answered an overture from the Presbytery of Montreal, asking it to review its investment policy. The church acknowledged the need to be aware of what its investments are supporting, saying, "The principle of ethical investing reaffirms the church's long-standing belief that no economic activity is amoral: all investment decisions have moral implications."

However, its short answer was, "The investments of the denomination are held for one reason only: to fund the ministry of the denomination. If less money is earned on investments, less money is available for ministry."

The assembly explained that ethical funds could carry a higher risk of loss, and the possibility of creating its own ethical screens tailored to Presbyterian values would also increase costs. Incurring such potential costs and losses would, in itself, "cause moral consequences."

The assembly went on to say that unless its federal and provincial governing statutes are amended, trustees "are not permitted to sacrifice higher financial return, lower investment risk and lower transaction expenses" in favour of creating ethical investment guidelines "that require non-financial considerations to govern the management of the denomination's investments."

Still, the church trustees work in conjunction with Justice Ministries to resolve any investment concerns that arise. Recommendations to sell a stock or disinvest in a company can be taken provided "there are alternative investments that provide similar rates of financial return and the diversification of the investment portfolio is not affected," according to the 2003 decision.

At the November meeting of the Assembly Council, where the topic of ethical screening was raised briefly, Roche said the trustee board is very sensitive to social implications involved in its investments. "This is not a yes or no point," he said. "It's an evolving point, and many organizations will continue to struggle with what they should do. It's a question of process."

Presbyterians worked with other churches in lobbying Talisman Energy to stop its indirect support of the war in Sudan through its oil investments there. The churches, which had shares in the company, urged Talisman to halt its support of the Sudanese government. The Presbyterian Church considered divesting all of its shares, but decided to maintain a minimal amount in order to influence the company. In 2002,

Watching the directors

Boards define the character of a company

BY MARIANNE MEED WARD

How do you topple a giant? As the biblical David discovered in the Valley of Elah, one little pebble can fell Goliath.

In the 21st Century, the giant is huge corporations like the once formidable Enron corporation. The Texas company employed 21,000 people and had $60 billion in assets before it went bankrupt in 2001 amid financial and accounting irregularities.

The pebble is a five-letter word: the board.

The new corporate wisdom in a post-Enron world is this: the strength (or weakness) of a company is contingent upon the strength (or weakness) of its board of directors—that independent group of people who oversee the paid management team on behalf of shareholders. Among other things, boards hire and fire the chief executive officer, review financial statements (and can appoint an independent accountant and auditor), and engage in strategic planning and risk management.

In corporate-speak, the role of the board falls under the rather bureaucratic moniker of corporate governance. In plain language, corporate governance is about the relationship between shareholders who invest, the CEO who spends the investment and the board, which bridges the two. Ultimately, though, corporate governance is about the safety of your retirement savings.

Though you may not realize it, you're a shareholder if you've invested in mutual funds or a pension plan. Those funds and plans invest your money, typically in publicly traded for-profit corporations. To the degree that these corporations are properly run, and that assumes having an effective board, your retirement savings are secure. But, as Enron investors discovered, when the giant falls, your savings evaporate overnight.

The strength of a board can be measured in two key areas (though there are many to consider):

1. Are board members sufficiently independent from management that they can red flag items of concern?
2. Do board members have access to detailed and timely reports in order to spot concerns?

Post-Enron, there have been major overhauls in corporate governance standards to ensure board independence and transparency of information, particularly from auditors and accountants. Leading the charge in Canada is the Toronto-based Canadian Coalition for Good Governance, formed in 2003. The CCGG helps its members (45 investment companies representing $810 billion of assets under management) build effective boards. In 2003, the coalition developed 12 guidelines outlining "minimum standards and best practices" for corporate boards. The guidelines are voluntary, and go beyond legal regulations.

"Regulations are only minimum standards," said Michael Wilson, CCGG chair and former federal finance minister, in his address to the coalition's annual meeting last June. "The truly effective boards are those that operate at the best practice level—those companies that have implemented excellent governance practices not because they were told to do so by a regulation, but



'The truly effective boards are those that operate at the best practice level – those companies that have implemented excellent governance practices not because they were told to do so by a regulation, but because they want to'

because they want to; because it is what their shareholders would expect them to do; because it makes good business sense."

What are some of those best practices? They are constantly evolving: today's best practice may be tomorrow's minimum standard. But for the moment, the key word in corporate governance is independence, says Wilson. "Boards have appointed more independent directors, increased the independence of the committees, split the roles of chair and CEO and scheduled in-camera meetings of only the independent directors at each board meeting," Wilson said.

Another key word in governance is executive compensation, specifically the push by shareholders to tie compensation to performance. The full list of CCGG guidelines is on their website, but they also include:

1. That board members own a minimum number of shares in the company (that way their own investments are on the line, too);
2. That the majority of board members (at least two-thirds) be independent (meaning they have no material relationship with or financial benefit from the company other than director fees and share ownership);
3. That board committees be composed exclusively of independent directors, because the heart of board oversight takes places in committees;
4. That audit committees (which review financial statements and financial controls) fully comply with enacted and emerging regulatory standards in Canada (set by provincial Securities Commissions), and the U.S.

"The work of audit committees is critical to the restoration of confidence in Canadian capital markets," state the CCGG guidelines. At minimum, audit committees must have "transparent and understandable financial statements prepared that fairly reflect the financial affairs of the corporation." The CCGG also recommends that audit committee members be financially literate, as well as independent of management.

That didn't happen in the Enron case. A combination of accounting irregularities and poor oversight brought down the giant. New corporate governance rules, particularly in the area of auditing, aim to avoid a similar disaster here. Those rules and guidelines build on two key reports in Canada, and one U.S. law: The 1994 *Dey Report*, by the Toronto Stock Exchange Committee on Corporate Governance; the 2001 *Saucier Report*, sponsored by the TSE, the Canadian Institute for Chartered Accountants and Canadian Venture Exchange; and the U.S. *Sarbanes-Oxley Act*, passed by Congress in 2002. Generally, they stress independence, transparency and skill-competency at the board level.

Though the reports are targeted to for-profit companies that are publicly traded, "the principles apply equally to not-for-profit and charitable corporations," state lawyers Michael Watts and Kathy O'Brien in an article in *Law & Governance*.

Certainly the ripple effects of new corporate governance guidelines are making their way into churches, including The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The church's rough equivalent of a corporate board is the General Assembly, with the Assembly Council being the smaller body that provides oversight in between annual assembly meetings. "Some of the major shifts we've seen in governance are toward much more detailed auditing practices," confirms Stephen Kendall, principle clerk of the Assembly Council.

Currently, the PCC is audited by Price Waterhouse Coopers. "As you would expect, they have been responding to these changes for a number of years, and so the approach they take is one of increased demands in reporting requirements," said Stephen Roche, the church's chief financial officer. "The audit committee has been responsive to that, as has management."

Still, those increased reporting requirements are time consuming, and aren't limited to the PCC itself. The need for documentation extends to the church's partners overseas, too, particularly if these partner-projects receive government funds through Canadian International Development Agency. Rick Fee, general secretary of the Life and Mission Agency, and acting director of Presbyterian World Service and Development, has undergone a CIDA audit. The audit stems from new accounting rules that Fee suspects are prompted by fears of charitable donations funding terrorism overseas.

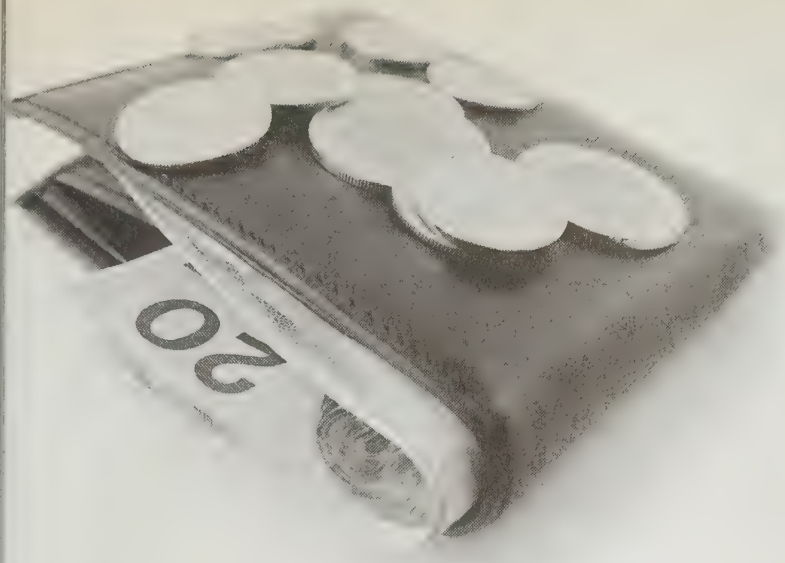
"Where previously funds were considered expended when they left a Canadian bank, no longer would that be the case. But only when they were properly expended at the other end for the project for which they were approved," explained Fee. This means PWS&D partners—some of whom are without computers, and electricity—must keep detailed written ledgers and receipts, and provide those to CIDA auditors. PWS&D staff is on the hot seat to chase those records. Since August, the audit has taken 50 per cent of the time of three staff members. "This degree of scrutiny is very time consuming and is costing us a lot of energy and money," comments Fee. "Some of the Canadian public will be assured that our money is being properly handled and will say we want this degree of scrutiny. But other Canadians might be generally scandalized by the effort that goes into it, or maybe just lament that the world has thus become."

Though the prompts may vary, improvements in governance practices are being adopted at a growing number of companies and charities. At the corporate level, according to the Rotman School of Management (University of Toronto) Board-Shareholder Confidence Index, the number of well governed companies has almost doubled in three years, from 46 in 2002, to 81 in 2005. However, 71 of the companies measured, almost half, still have work to do. That probably applies to some charities, as well.

It seems there's no turning back on what the world has become—a place where constant vigilance against fraud or incompetence are the order of the day. But the payoff is gigantic—no small pebbles will fell the giant of your investments and donations.

Marianne Meed Ward writes a religion and ethics column in the *Toronto Sunday Sun*, and provides weekly commentary on *360 Vision* (Vision TV). She lives in Burlington.

JAMES PATERSON



Talisman pulled its money out of Sudan, and the churches claimed a victory.

Eugene Ellmen, executive director at the Social Investment Organization, said as shareholders learn to voice their concerns, corporations will begin to take notice of what the public expects from them. "For companies wanting to be sustainable over the long term, they're starting to wake up to their obligations."

Socially responsible investing involves considering the impact of production on people and the earth. It considers not only the financial bottom line, but the social and environmental outcomes as well. It operates along three lines: investment screening, which prohibits investments in companies that may have a negative impact such as tobacco and alcohol, or allows investments in companies that contribute positively such as those with extensive environmental protocols; active ownership/shareholder responsibility, which involves shareholders establishing standards and encouraging or pressuring companies to adhere to those standards; and investing in community development where investments are directly channeled to such initiatives.

Corporate social responsibility can be loosely defined as companies being mindful of their actions and the impact they have on the world around them. Included in this is the practice of transparent reporting practices, good governance and positive employee relations.

Churches played a major role in the beginnings of CSR. The Taskforce on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility was established in 1975 (and is currently a part of KAIROS—a social justice organization supported by churches, including the Presbyterian Church). It was created to help churches and church agencies research corporate performance and develop strategies to address issues of social responsibility. Despite criticism from much of the business sector, the ecumenical taskforce worked diligently to bring the issues of corporate social responsibility into the public consciousness. It was instrumental in ending Canadian support (particularly bank loans) of apartheid in South Africa, with the government of Ontario ultimately passing the South Africa Trust Investment Act in 1990 allowing the disposal of and/or the refusal to acquire South African investments.

"Canadian churches, including The Presbyterian Church in Canada, provided important leadership in Canada in the corporate social responsibility movement," said Stephen Allen, associate secretary of the Presbyterian Church's Justice Ministries. "In the early days, the notion that corporations had any responsibility beyond the financial bottom line and observing the laws of Canada or of other countries had very little credibility."

Today, there is just over $65-billion in socially responsible investment assets in Canada, according to the Social Investment Organization. Likewise, a recent survey conducted by Mercer Investment Consulting found that 73 per cent of the 195 managers who responded predict that social and/or environmental corporate performance indicators will be mainstream within 10 years.

Although numerous studies indicate that Canadian investors are putting increasing importance on social and environmental factors when evaluating companies, only 26 per cent of Canadian shareholders surveyed by GlobeScan said their investments are ethically based. And according to *Corporate Knights*, the world gave or pledged $4-billion in tsunami relief, while it spent $950-billion on weapons of war in 2003 alone.

With the apparent contradictions, it's difficult to tell if things are really changing. Gordon Pape, Canada's mutual funds expert and author of numerous investment books, said there is still a long way to go. He said ethical investing is hardly a blip on the overall investment radar screen. "I don't see a trend in that direction," he said during an interview with the *Record*. "We haven't really seen any significant growth. Ethical funds continue to be on the fringe of investors' consciousness."

Ethical mutual funds, such as those offered by Meritas Financial or The Ethical Funds Company, are those that have been chosen in accordance with certain screens, or chosen for their "best practices" compared to their competitors. Meritas,

Recognizing the do-gooders

Corporations can be rewarded for their socially responsible work through *PR News*, an American publication serving the public relations and communications industry. Its Corporate Social Responsibility Awards recognizes goodwill and philanthropy in corporations, non-profits and NGOs throughout the world. Maintaining a positive reputation through highlighting socially responsibly initiatives is becoming increasingly important, and the awards showcase organizations that have brought such efforts into the limelight.

The winners of the 2005 awards will be announced in February and will honour eight categories including community affairs, business ethics, human rights communications and employee relations. In 2004, Dell Computers and its agency partner GCI won the environmental communications category for its campaign to raise awareness of options for unwanted computer equipment. More than 102 tonnes of computer equipment was recycled and more than 850 tonnes of computers granted to needy recipients in 2004.

– AM with files from PR News

for instance, will not choose companies involved in tobacco, alcohol, military contracting, gambling or pornography. Each company is different, and bases its decisions on varying criteria and values. It is up to the investor to determine which fund best suits their own standards. One fund may shun investments in the nuclear power industry, for example, while another may consider it a clean alternative source of power.

Pape said there are two obstacles preventing ethical funds from grabbing a bigger piece of the investment pie. "The difficulties are getting mainstream acceptability, and the fact that they'll never be taken seriously unless they can at least do as well as the broader categories."

Currently, ethical funds appeal to specialized markets—Christians, Muslims, women and homosexuals can all find investment opportunities tailored to their general value system. However, opinions vary on whether or not these investments can grow your money at the same rate as their mainstream counterparts. *Corporate Knights* magazine conducts an annual report of ethical funds gauging how well the corporations adhere to their socially responsible claims as well as their financial returns. Results vary widely, with social scores ranging from seven per cent to 100 per cent, with a similar range for financial performance. The magazine's editor, Toby Heaps, said investors must realize that all funds are not created equal. "Some of them are just paying lip service," he said. He cautioned that investors should do their homework before handing over their money.

Jantzi Research Inc. tries to help investors with that homework. The organizations rates fund performance compared to the Toronto Stock Exchange. Its most recent assessment (as of Oct. 2005) showed that the approved funds on its Jantzi Social Index actually outperform their mainstream counterparts. Since its creation in Jan. 2000, the JSI achieved an annualized return of 5.61 per cent, while the S&P/TSX 60 had an annualized return of 4.57 per cent over the same period. The JSI consists of 60 Canadian companies that pass Jantzi-chosen social and environmental screens. They do not include companies that have significant involvement in the production of nuclear power, the manufacture of tobacco or weapons-related contracting.

Ellmen said the high returns can be attributed to the fact that responsible corporations treat their employees well, resulting in higher productivity. They also stay out of expensive legal battles over product safety, such as tobacco companies, which quickly zap financial resources, and manage to avoid other reputation-damaging disputes. And even if an ethical fund doesn't pay off immediately, said Ellmen, good returns over the long-term are likely.

Currently, federal and provincial law (except in Manitoba where a recent amendment stipulates that a pension trustee who uses non-financial criteria to make investment decisions is not automatically in breach of his fiduciary duties) says that a trustee board's primary obligation is its monetary requirements. Prudence, care and loyalty are the most important criteria when handling the investments of its plan members. According to Roche, the church must show itself to be in compliance with these laws.

Although there have been no common law cases in Canada to demonstrate the consequences of doing otherwise, a case in the UK is often cited as reason enough. In Cowan vs. Scargill the decision stated, among other things, that, "trustees are not to invest on the basis of political or social/environmental beliefs."

Despite this, there are some who say pension laws have traditionally been interpreted too narrowly. According to a 2001 research paper by the Vancouver-based Shareholder Association for Research and Education (SHARE), pension trustees may have more leeway than they think when considering invest-



Fiduciary vs. social responsibilities

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH has two trust funds—the pension fund and the consolidated fund. (The *Record* is an investor in the consolidated fund). The pension fund—for all ministers and employees at church offices and others paid by the church and participating in the pension program—has $162 million in assets. The consolidated portfolio covers the rest of the church's available funds, with a variable market value of about $72 million—approximately $20 million of which are investments by some local churches and church organizations—with an annual indicated cash value of $2.7 million, for a cash yield on the portfolio of 3.6 per cent.

Both funds are handled by the trustee board, which has the authority to invest, manage and control the church's assets. Above all, they are obligated by both federal and provincial governments to meet the church's fiduciary responsibilities, especially where pensions are concerned.

Four fund managers take care of the actual investing of the money, acting on guidelines given to them by the church. These guidelines were approved by the General Assembly in 1971, were expanded in 1973 and 1981 and were reiterated in 1990. The church recognized "the importance of exercising responsible stewardship in its corporate stockholdings," and it should "examine and evaluate the policies of companies in which the church holds stocks" and exercise its right as a stakeholder to hold these companies accountable.

In 1973, the Committee on Social Responsibility in Investment Policy recommended that each investment be examined individually based on the following criteria:

- Pollution control and abatement
- Pursuit of justice in world development
- Achievement of just and equitable national development
- Equality of opportunity for minority and oppressed groups
- Reduction of armament production
- Provision of adequate housing, health and welfare



'The investments of the denomination are held for one reason only: to fund the ministry of the denomination. If less money is earned on investments, less money is available for ministry'

ment options. "Although no definite conclusion can be made without further direction from government and the courts, what emerges from a review of existing legal authorities and empirical evidence is that trustees have far greater discretion in this area than they have been led to believe," stated the report. "The use of investment practices that are socially responsible are compatible with the requirement to ensure financial security for plan members and can actually enhance plan performance when applied in a prudent manner."

This opinion was supported in an Oct. 2005 study by an American law firm and presented at the UN's Environment Program Finance Initiative in New York. It concluded that provided trustees act in prudence, with loyalty to their task of growing the pension fund, and conducting sufficient research and analysis, trustees can and should take social and environmental factors into account when making investment decisions.

"Integrating ESG [environmental, social and governance] characteristics into an investment analysis so as to more reliably predict financial performance is clearly permissible and is arguably required in all jurisdictions," states the report.

Peter Chapman, SHARE's executive director, said the UN report is encouraging. He said the main barrier to mainstream acceptance of this outlook is a lack of clarity in the pension legislation, leaving trustees unsure of exactly what they are and are not allowed to do.

Pape agrees. He said Canada lags behind the United States on SRI legislation. He said the Ontario Securities Commission, the leading regulator in that province, "has been remarkably slow making a move on any of this."

The Canadian Pension Plan Investment Board recently adopted a new social investment policy. They maintained their obligation to fiduciary duties and therefore will not screen companies; however, the board is planning on engaging corporate management over social and environmental issues. Eugene Ellmen said that the CPP has taken this step as one of the largest stock holders in Canada with about $100-billion in assets and serving 16 million Canadians, "augers well for the growth of this sector."

When discussing the UN report, Chapman said it holds important messages for the church. First, it shows that social and environmental factors are material to the financial success of investments and that trustees may be in breach if they do not

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The committee explained that for the church to accomplish its goals, it can consult with management, exercise shareholder, government or consumer pressure and divestment or refusal to buy.

Divestment in Israel is currently being debated in many churches including the Presbyterian Church (USA), where numerous members do not want to indirectly support the building of the wall separating Israel from Palestinian territory.

In 1975, churches joined together to form the Taskforce on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility—a leader in highlighting human rights abuses and justice issues of the time, including apartheid in South Africa. In 1981, the General Assembly adopted more comprehensive guidelines on social responsibility, including the consideration of the rights and needs of employees, the social and environmental conditions and economic development of the communities where corporations are present, civil, political and religious liberties of those communities and issues surrounding the quality of the goods being produced.

In 1990, the Pension Board explained that these guidelines serve as a background to all its investments, and that fund managers are aware of and understand the guidelines.

In 2003, the assembly highlighted the notion that investments are for the purpose of maximal financial return.

Still, the church's Social Action Handbook confirms the church's commitment to socially responsible investments while recognizing the complexities of the issue. "It is important that the church be seen, not as sitting in judgment of those who are in positions of responsibility in large corporations...but as caring about people." It goes onto say, "The church is concerned with more than profit-making, important as that may be to its work... therefore, agencies and individuals within the church should consider other investment options" such as strategic investment, disinvestment and creative investments where capital goes towards creating social programs and improving communities. – *AM, with files from The Social Action Handbook*

take them into account (responsible corporate practices can be a good indicator of long-term sustainability and success, and therefore, should be considered by trustees). Second, where an institution is of a single view, like the church, trustees would be in breach of its duties if it invested in something that went directly against the institution's morals and values (also called Mission-Based Investing). And thirdly, where two investment prospects are equal, social and environmental factors can be a tipping point in reaching a decision, provided sufficient research has been done first.

There are institutions that put greater emphasis on this newer interpretation. The United Church of Canada has developed ethical screens for its investment choices that are built into its investment policy. They subscribe to the Jantzi Social Index and their Canadian fund managers use it as a guide. In turn, the church receives certification from the managers that they abided by these guidelines. They also have policies regarding how to vote at corporate board meetings. For example, they oppose situations where the chairmen of the board and the chief executive officer are one person, as this can lead to limited accountability.



"We're aware of the concerns surrounding pension funds. A pension plan is owned by its members and you do have a fiduciary responsibility to maximize returns," said Ron Olsen, the United Church's Chief Financial Officer. "But we are a church, and social responsibility is implicit in our objectives and in our stance on social justice issues.

"We believe we will enhance our returns because we're invested in solid companies that are responsible and well-run," he continued.

South of the border, The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) employs a staff person who studies the annual reports of church-invested companies, and keeps abreast of news stories related to them. The Mission Responsibility through Investment department oversees church investments and files shareholder resolutions with companies whose practices the church disagrees with. PC (U.S.A.) also has its own investment and loans program, where investors' financial contributions are used as loans for church improvements and growth projects. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Foundation also sponsors New Covenant Funds, four professionally managed mutual funds that screen for tobacco, alcohol, gambling, firearms and defense contractors.

The federal government recently heard a recommendation to install regulations that would require corporations to abide by CSR rules. A report from the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade called for the government to create and enforce social and environmental standards on Canadian mining companies operating internationally. The government responded in October, dismissing all recommendations, and will continue to rely on voluntary operation guidelines established by agencies, government bodies and corporations themselves.

The Presbyterian Church's Stephen Allen said he is encouraged by the fact that a government department produced the original document, even though it was defeated in the end. "It may not change the world, but it becomes a benchmark," he said. He acknowledges that there is a long way to go, but said progress has been made, noting that CSR has "altered the corporate discourse."

Even though no corporation will ever be perfect, Allen said CSR is all about "raising the bar" and encouraging corporations to challenge their own performance standards and to continually increase their positive results.

"While much remains to be done, CSR is firmly established and has had a positive impact on society," said Allen. "A majority of Canadians want to work for, shop at and invest in corporations that strive to be ethical."

Heaps said perceptions are definitely changing, with socially responsible vocabulary increasingly fighting its way into boardrooms. "Corporations have to become part of the solution," he said. "They're present in everyone's lives, and they impact all of us. Corporations aren't just somewhere, they're everywhere."

Churches set benchmarks

THE TASKFORCE on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility, along with equivalent bodies from the United States and United Kingdom, created a framework for analyzing how corporations perform on a variety of socially responsible factors. Released in 1995, Bench Marks—Principles for Global Corporate Responsibility—sets down comprehensive criteria for a corporation's commitment to its principles and bench marks for companies measuring their performance.

Bench Marks covers all areas of corporate responsibility including care of local ecosystems and communities, shareholder engagement and employee relations and finances. They can be used by NGOs, corporations and stakeholders to assess business conduct.

The taskforce was motivated to create Bench Marks when in 1992, the UN Centre on Transnational Corporations proposed an international code of conduct for businesses. When announced, it was blocked by governments, including Canada, in favour of voluntary initiatives proposed by transnational corporations.

– Taskforce on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility

Following our Gospel values

Did Assembly drop the ball on ethical investing?

BY ART VAN SETERS



Albert Einstein once said, "The world is not dangerous because of those who do harm, but because of those who look at it without doing anything." Can this language be applied to investment portfolios? Are investors, including corporate ones like churches, culpable for their reluctance or failure to be intentional in ensuring that their investments are more and more ethically responsible? I wondered about this as I recently re-read the 2003 Assembly Council Report.

Three years previously a robust Round Table discussion on ethical investing was held in Montreal. Apparently some members of that presbytery took seriously the moral challenges from that event to urge our denomination to become more proactive about ethical investing. Their 2002 overture to Assembly argued that investments ought to be about more than maximum dollar income. In their view we ought to follow the Gospel to ensure that our investments do the least harm and provide the widest benefit possible. We should also seek to do this ecumenically.

In the 1980s, in response to apartheid policies in South Africa, investors started to use negative screens. They refused to invest in companies that did business with regimes that were oppressive. Gradually more positive screens were developed to reward those businesses that paid attention to the environment and dealt equitably with workers.

To be sure, making such decisions adds a whole additional responsibility for trustees. Which companies should be avoided and which should be supported? Should a minimum number of stocks be retained in a company like Talisman Energy to influence withdrawal from operations like those it once had in war-torn Sudan? The question of whether to invest in certain pharmaceutical companies is hard to answer. The ratio of scientists to drug salespeople visiting doctors has grown exponentially in the past 25 years, and this certainly adds to the costs. Do increasingly higher drug prices mean that some drugs are now beyond the reach of many who need them? One thinks particularly of the desperate need in Africa for antiretroviral drugs to survive HIV/AIDS.

Our Assembly Council's 2003 report acknowledged the complexity of such factors. It also referred to a number of proactive decisions that our denomination has made with reference to South Africa as well as to Talisman Energy. In spite of such decisions, the report ends up defending the status quo and says, in effect, that to accept the overture's basic request would interfere with the fiduciary role of the trustees.

The Council's objections to the request include the surprising statement that the "investments held by the denomination are held for one reason only: to fund the ministry of the denomination." To underscore the singular financial objective of its investment policy, the report adds, "If less money is earned on investments, less money is available for ministry."

This sounds somewhat utilitarian. How we invest our church's money does not seem to be part of our ministry. Only the end result of having funds available for our various departments and programs appears to be what counts.

I submit that a theologically informed response has to recognize that our stewardship includes how we raise money and not just how we spend it. A covenantal understanding of economy includes how money matters can creatively impact the environment and thoughtfully foster human community.

Even our secular society is voicing a larger agenda. Deb Abby, in *Global Profit and Global Justice*, argues there is "empirical evidence that shows a positive link between companies that are socially responsible and strong financial performers." In the world of business there is a growing conviction that fiduciary responsibility also includes social responsibility. Churches have been in the forefront of the corporate social responsibility movement for decades and our Assembly Council seems to have forgotten this in drafting its response to Montreal Presbytery's overture.

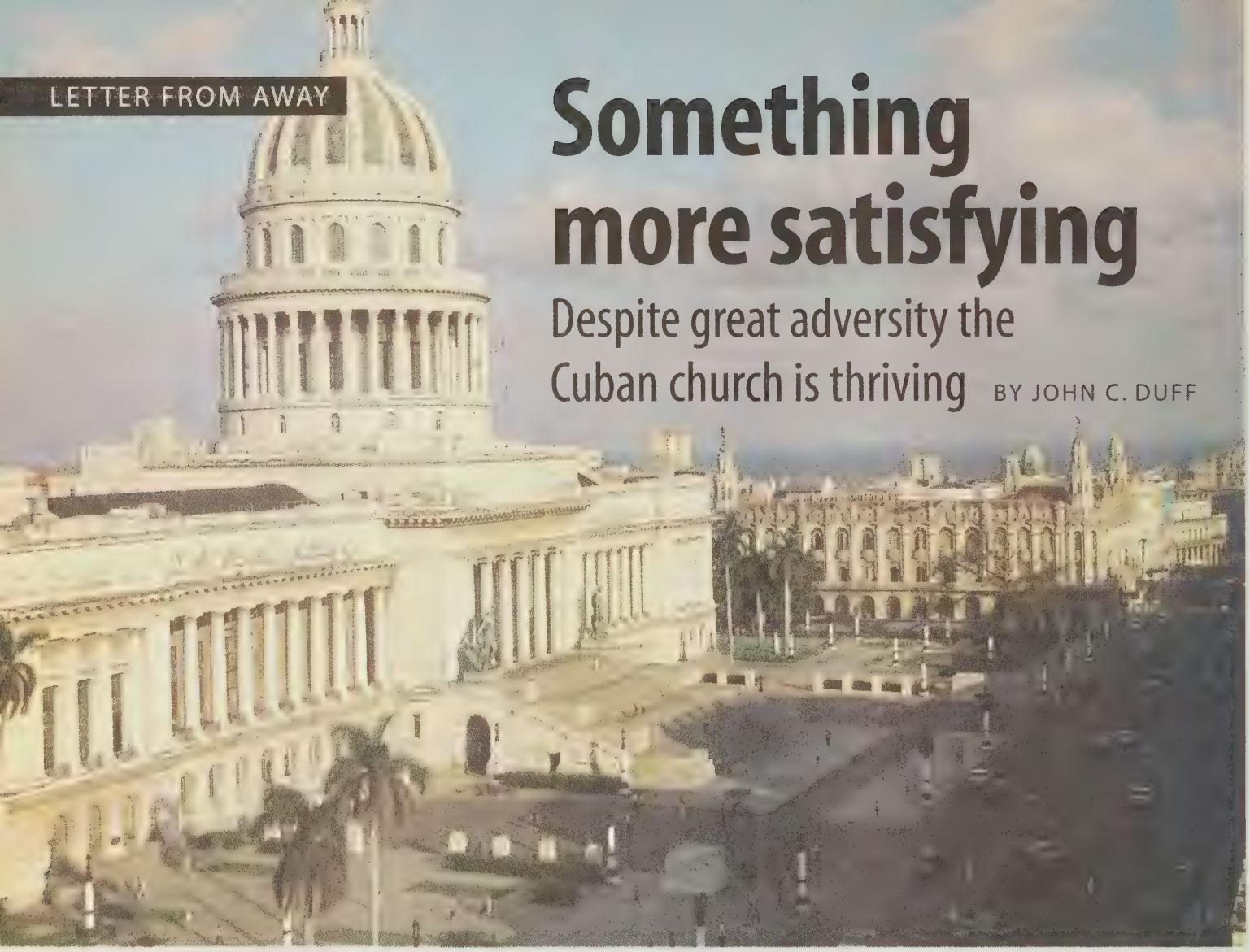
We need to revisit the subject of ethical investing as a denomination. Perhaps we ought to ensure that here also we are seeking to live by values which fundamentally reflect our understanding of the Gospel and our calling as a church.

Arthur Van Seters is Principal Emeritus of Knox College, Moderator of the 125th General Assembly and a member of the Corporate Social-Responsibility Task Force of KAIROS.

Something more satisfying

Despite great adversity the Cuban church is thriving

BY JOHN C. DUFF



MY INTEREST in visiting the church and the Evangelical Seminary in Cuba goes back to contacts with Central American Christians beginning in the late 1980s. My then-congregation in Ottawa shared with others in the sponsorship of two families from El Salvador, whose robust faith and hope made me want to visit the places they came from and learn more about the sources of their spiritual strength, their culture and the political struggles they had faced. By 1993 an opportunity arose for me to go to Nicaragua. I served there until the end of 1996.

Since returning to Canada, a good deal of my heart has remained in Latin America. My visit to Cuba in May and early June of 2001 was sponsored by International Ministries and St. David's Church, St. John's, Newfoundland. Rev. Hector Mendez invited me to stay in the dormitory at First Presbyterian-Reformed Church, Havana. In existence since 1890, the church is located in a once-prosperous district of the city. Walking around the district now, I was impressed by an inner-city decay intensified by a half-century of economic embargo imposed by the United States. Peso shops carry basic goods like rice, beans, cooking oil, eggs and meat sold up to the monthly rations the government allows for each Cuban. There are fewer street vendors than in other Latin American countries, but also fewer people begging, because the subsidized monthly rations provide basic survival.

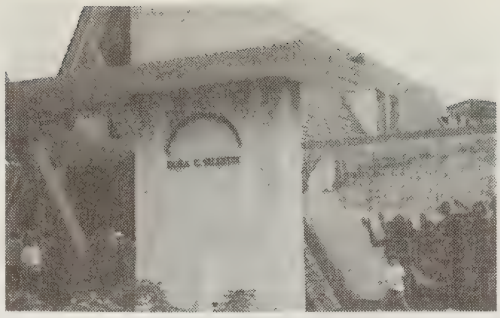


The old Capitol building, built in the 1920s, marks the transition from Centro Havana to Old Havana. On billboards and embankments are the slogans of the revolution and the image of Che Guevara. Much of the Old City is undergoing impressive restoration, and classic hotels of a former era are being restored to enhance tourism. I wondered what ordinary people who live nearby thought of this effort while their homes continue to crumble.



Mendez' ministry has been recog-

(Left) Seminary is a family affair in Cuba. Students relax between classes with their spouses and children. (Right) A robust congregation participates in worship.



The Dora E. Valentin Presbyterian Reformed Church in Varadero.

nized as being on the "cutting edge of mission" by the Presbyterian Church's E.H. Johnson Award. The church ministers in a multitude of ways. Supported by links with YMCAs in Atlantic Canada, the Asociación de Jóvenes Christiana (ACJ) offers Christian service to the community, including a telephone help-line staffed by psychologists, relaxation and seniors programs and programs for over 1,000 children in the Havana area. This is the only Y which has ever functioned in a communist country. The government tolerates it as a ministry of the church. It operates under the umbrella of the Cuban Council of Churches. The church is also the centre for the publication of a weekly bulletin of ecumenical news, which is mailed across the country.

There are Bible study and prayer cells during the week across the city, and the church also operates a library and study centre for Christian literature. On Sunday morning there is church school for all ages, as well as adult classes. The worship service includes an extensive period of congregational participation in the form of testimonies, as well as the traditional elements of scripture, pastoral prayer, hymns and preaching. On my last Sunday in Havana I had the privilege of witnessing a service for the reception of 49 new members by profession of Christian faith. The service bore witness to the tremendous growth of Protestant churches in Cuba, which have grown in membership by 50 per cent in the last six years.

The Evangelical Seminary is located on a beautiful property overlooking the city of Matanzas. It serves students from Episcopal, Methodist, Presbyterian and other Protestant denominations. Many students live on campus with their families, forming a community of about 150. The many children running in and out of events like thesis defences were a reminder that Latin American culture is likely to include whole families in things we reserve for adults.

I was privileged to be at the Seminary at the time candidates for the licentiate (a professional degree more advanced than our bachelor's) were defending their theses. One student urged the church not to send reluctant graduates with an urban background into rural ministry without giving them orientation to the cultural differences in rural society and encouraging a commitment to longer term service. Another saw the recent church growth in Cuba as leading to the temptation to focus attention only on the Christian formation of new converts, to the detriment of the church's prophetic and diaconal ministry to the society as a whole. Another student looked at the impact on the church of the mass exodus of U.S. missionaries from Cuba after 1959, and the lay movement that sprang up to offer worship leadership, evangelism and caring to Cuban congregations suddenly bereft of their pastors. One of the most significant was presented by a Presbyterian student whose thesis was Ambassadors In Memory Of Christ. It considered the theological understanding of reconciliation in the history of the church. The final chapter asked how, when the time came, the church in Cuba could engage in a ministry of reconciliation between Cubans who remained on their island and Cubans who went into exile in the United States.

While many church people appreciate the practical gains of the revolution, there is no sign that Christians are idolizing the Marxist ideology or the revolution's heroes



The Church in Cuba has suffered from great adversity over the last 42 years. When the Soviet Union was a major benefactor of the Cuban Revolution, Cuba was characterized by a militant official atheism. There were disincentives for those who persisted in being believers, and the churches were expected to gradually wither away. But when the Soviet system collapsed, the Cuban government re-evaluated its stance towards the churches and began initiatives with the evangelical churches to bring about a less hostile relationship between church and state. While many church people appreciate the practical gains of the revolution, there is no sign that Christians are idolizing the Marxist ideology or the revolution's heroes. Many chafe under the restrictions and controls of life in a communist state. But in the more relaxed atmosphere of the last decade, the church has enjoyed unprecedented growth; the fruit, I believe, of its faithfulness to the Gospel through the most difficult of times, and also of the thirst of Cubans for something more satisfying than dialectical materialism to sustain them spiritually.

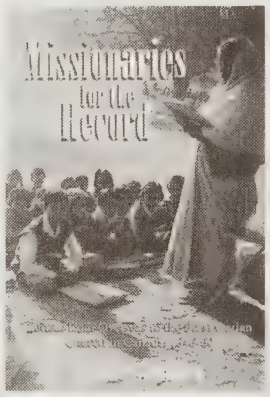
Rev. John C. Duff is now retired and lives in Paradise, Nfld.

A minimalist history of missionaries

A survey of the rank-and-file working in out-of-the-way places

BY BARRY MACK

Missionaries for the Record: Letters from Overseas to the Presbyterian Church in Canada 1846 – [19]60
Geoffrey Johnston
Guardian: Belleville, 2005.



As someone who happens to be interested in the subject of Canadian Presbyterian Missions, I found this book useful. In 18 short chapters it provides an overview of the overseas missionary efforts of the Presbyterian Church in Canada during the years in question. The main players and background are sketched in, some excerpts from letters to the *Record, Glad Tidings* and the *Presbyterian Witness* quoted, and we get Johnston's running commentary on what he thinks it all adds up to—which, in the great scheme of things, doesn't seem to be very much. As the author puts it, "it is a study of missionary letters, the work of rank-and-file missionaries working in out-of-the-way places, writing to supporters in a small country and especially to women. They are letters from the margins to the margins."

Alvin Austin, in *Saving China,* notes that Canada sent more missionaries overseas per capita than any other country in what used to be called Christendom. I've heard it claimed that something like a third of those who worked in the Canadian Department of External Affairs, in its heyday, were missionary kids. The Canadian novelist Neil Bissoondath notes in his critique of multiculturalism, *Selling Illusions,* that he was educated at a Presbyterian mission school in Trinidad. George Leslie Mackay is a well-known figure in Taiwan, a hundred years after his death. Jonathan Goforth was involved in some large-scale evangelism campaigns in Manchuria late in his career. If the besetting sin of most academic historians is overestimating the significance of their chosen topic, Johnston demonstrates his originality by taking the minimalist route.

Such generalizations and recurring observations as are made, would be more convincing if counter evidence had been considered. For example we are told numerous times that the subjects of this book were apolitical evangelicals. But what are we then to make of Dr. Frank Scofield who is buried in a cemetery in Korea and honoured as a Korean patriot, for his involvement in the Independence movement after the First World War?

Indian missionary, John Buchanan, apparently saw the cattle thieving habits of the Bhil people "very much after the manner of the Highlanders of Scotland" and claimed them as kindred spirits. "If the old football boys of Queen's had seen the chase they would have shouted, 'Go in, Queen's' but I think that if they could have been at the top of one of the mountain peaks and seen these wild men of the jungle carrying off the prize clean out of sight of their old comrade they would have as truly shouted, 'Hurrah for the Bhil!'" What sort of worldview is implied by such a juxtaposition? A similar comparison between Canadian Indians and Highlanders crops up frequently in 19th century Presbyterian circles. Was it tied to Scottish Common Sense philosophy and its 'stages of civilization' view of the evolution of human society? Buchanan's own Highland ancestors had been tamed by the forces of civilization in not too distant past. Education rather than race was seen to be the key factor in moving people through the progressive stages of human culture. Are 19th century Presbyterians better described as 'culturist' rather than 'racists' perhaps? The book suggests many such questions, which the author doesn't pursue; it bites off more material than it chews.

On the other hand, I found myself wishing for longer extract from letters by those who, like Lillian Dickson, apparently could really write. Comments like "irrepressible wife" and "too much of a missionary entrepreneur to take a back seat to anyone" pique the reader's curiosity, but we are not provided with the particulars or enough evidence to illustrate the point or allow us to draw our own conclusions. Longer extracts would have pushed the book more in a popular direction.

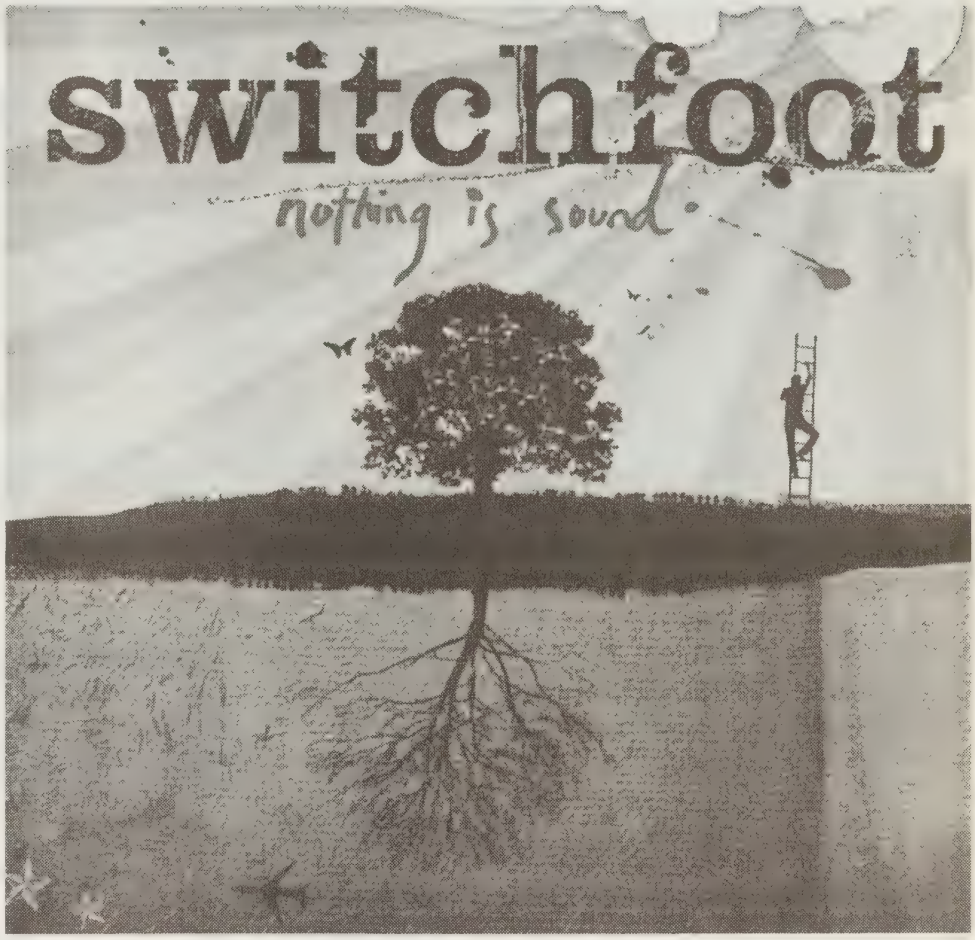
The book is clearly in need of more editing. The problem announces itself conspicuously on the front cover. But inside there are also spelling mistakes and typos, and the footnotes should have been checked. (I drew a blank with no. 12 on page 76 and 22 on page 77 when I tried to look up the reference.) While it is hardly the definitive book on the subject, the author is to be commended for his pioneering efforts and his diligence in reading through back issues of Presbyterian periodicals. I hope that his work will provide lots of good jumping off points for essays by future students of the subject.

Rev. Barry Mack is minister at St. Andrew's St. Lambert, Longueuil, Quebec.

A simple bitter pill of truth

Switchfoot pairs thoughtful lyrics with mediocre sound

BY AMY MACLACHLAN



Nothing is Sound
Switchfoot
Sony Music Canada Inc

The fifth and latest album from Switchfoot, *Nothing is Sound*, can be easily lumped into a growing musical trend; one which features sufficiently attractive lead male singers with slightly raspy, post-pubescent voices belting out tunes of love-and-world-gone-wrong. Their sound isn't edgy enough to compare them to the likes of Green Day or The Foo Fighters, nor are they peppy enough to slide into the boy band category. Their vocals are buoyed by standard guitar riffs that often drown out voices rather than highlight them, and the world will continue to turn when their careers have ended. There is nothing to really dislike, but nothing that stands out either.

And yet, San Diego-born Switchfoot has managed to put together an album that is cohesive and easy to listen to while highlighting social awareness and religious longings. Filled with modern day lamentations and painful psalm-like questions, the album, which follows their highly successful crossover debut *The Beautiful Letdown* (2003), includes several meaty lines. The Shadow Proves the Sunshine, written by lead singer/guitarist Jon Foreman after a trip to Africa, contains the following: "Oh Lord why did you forsake me? Oh Lord, don't be far away. Storm clouds gathering beside me, please Lord don't look the other way. I'm a crooked soul trying to stand up straight. Shine on me."

The inspiration for Happy is a Yuppie Word was borrowed from a Bob Dylan interview with *Rolling Stone* where he said people should talk of being blessed rather than being happy. The song laments the things of this world that are supposed to bring happiness, while longing for something more. "Blessed is the man who's lost it all, looking for an orphanage. I'm looking for a bridge I can't burn down, I don't believe the emptiness. I'm looking for the kingdom to come down. Everything is meaningless."

"Everyone has their own version of what happiness means," writes Foreman on the band's website, "but many of the things we're going for are absurd. There's this moment in Jewish scripture, in Ecclesiastes, where it says, 'Meaningless, meaningless, everything is meaningless.' That's the place where our new record starts."

Nothing is Sound was written while on the road, and is a good mix of ballads and harder sounds seeking to explore questions prompted by a messed-up world. Such questions can be found in The Blues: "Is there nothing here worth saving? Is there no one here at all? Is there any net left that could break our fall? It'll be a day like this one when the sky falls down and the hungry and poor and deserted are found."

"This record was the attempt to make something beautiful in filthy backstage dressing rooms everywhere, trying to sing something true with a broken heart," writes Foreman. "Maybe that's what this record hopes to be: a simple bitter pill of truth that steps outside of our hamster wheel and looks up at the stars and beyond."

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with

ANDREW IRVINE

Monday, May 29 - Friday, June 2, 2006

As men and women called to leadership in the church, clergy are confused and struggle with their identity and place in the changing culture. The minister continues on faithfully but with need for support and nurture. Where do ministers find strength for the journey? A recent study by the facilitator of this retreat discovered that ministers need a 'safe space' to reflect on these matters and to find support from colleagues.This event will explore the identities of ministers and their roles in leadership in this century.

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Iconic mother must seek answers

Guilt, shame and sorrow motivate Cindy Sheehan

I have opposed the war in Iraq from the very beginning. I also opposed the sanctions imposed on that country. But I support the liberation of Afghanistan and refuse to embrace any of the simplistic solutions of either Left or Right.

The Christian response to the conflict demands balance and moderation, as does the Christian response to any important issue. And that bring us to the case of Cindy Sheehan, who has become symbolic of a fundamentally important division in North American society.

This woman, of course, lost her son in the war. Casey Sheehan joined the military, re-enlisted and then volunteered to take part in a specific military action when as a mechanic he was not required to do so. His actions were selfless and heroic.

The question is whether his mother's actions are similarly so. Opponents of the war have no doubts and have given her an iconic status, transforming Sheehan into a living testimony to the futility and error of President's Bush policies.

The Right has reacted, using what are sometimes thuggish personal attacks and accusing her of being a stooge and a fool who has allowed herself to be used by dangerous groups and individuals.

The truth, as so often, is somewhere in the middle. Cindy Sheehan seemed not to have any politics for the longest time, met with the President after her son's death and praised George W. Bush's warmth. Then the change occurred.

Suddenly the Bush regime was conducting "an evil war", the United States government was "a morally repugnant system" and "the biggest terrorist is George W. Bush." She compared Lynne Stewart, a lawyer convicted of providing material support to terrorism, to the greatest of civil rights campaigners.

She made numerous inflated statements, demanded that the President meet with her again and marched with Marxist revolutionaries who are far more concerned with the violent overthrow of democracy than with the well being of the Iraqi people.

All of which she has a perfect right to do. And all of which may well be provoked by guilt and shame and sorrow. The guilt that she was unable to prevent her son from going to war. The shame that as a mother she could not protect her boy. The sorrow at unimaginable loss.

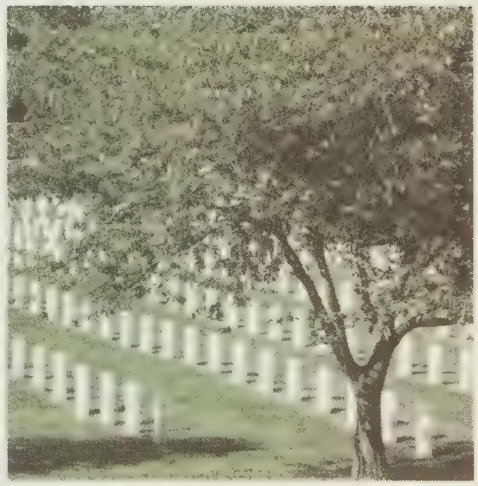
Of course it was not her fault and of course she should not blame herself. But of course she may well do so and you and I may do the same in such a hellish circumstance.

The tragedy is that even moderates on this issue now see an exploitation of Casey Sheehan's death and resent his mother and her friends for it. Those moderates include her husband of 28 years, who has filed for divorce.

Also Casey Sheehan's paternal grandparents, who have stated that, "We do not agree with the political motivations and publicity tactics of Cindy Sheehan. She now appears to be promoting her own personal agenda and notoriety at the expense of her son's good name and reputation. The Sheehan family lost our beloved Casey in the Iraq War and we have been silently, respectfully grieving. The rest of the Sheehan family supports the troops, our country and our President, silently, with prayer and respect."

I find it impossible to take an absolute stand on this case, partly because I am not sure how I would react if, God forbid, such a fate ever befell me.

I would, however, respectfully advise Cindy Sheehan to ask her comrades certain questions, ones that I am convinced all opponents of the Iraq war, and in particular Christian opponents, should ask.



I find it impossible to take an absolute stand on this case, partly because I am not sure how I would react if, God forbid, such a fate ever befell me

Why did they not march against Saddam Hussein when he was murdering hundreds of thousands of people?

Why are they so angry with their own government but so quiet about the routine torture and incarceration of political and religious dissidents in, for example, Cuba?

Why are they not demanding an end to the murderous regimes of Syria and Iran and why are they so selective in condemning flawed democracies but ignoring or even supporting brutal dictatorships?

The answers will tell us if they are enlightened opponents of an unjust war or hateful extremists with a poisonous agenda. Demand answers Cindy, for your sake and for the sake of your son.

Michael Coren is a broadcaster, author and speaker. Visit his website at www.michaelcoren.com.

Bath time testimony

We need to love people until they ask us why



It's bath night. Around the world hurried and harried parents seize precious moments to rest and recharge while their children set uncontested Olympic records in the dunking and I-got-more-water-on-the-walls-and-ceiling-than-you-did events.

At our peculiar house, on this particular night, a four-year-old and his younger brother are all wet. The older is constructing a bubble bath beard on the younger. I can't help over-hearing their conversation...

"Did you know that you've done bad things?"

"Ya." It is one of three words one-year-old Jeffrey knows. The other two are "Yep" and "Uh huh."

"You have done sins," continues the four-year-old kindly.

"Yep."

"And you shall go to hell."

"Yep."

"Hell is hot."

The one-year-old is making a hole in the soap bar.

"But you can go to heaven. Do you want to go to heaven?"

Jeffrey sips some bath water before responding: "Uh huh."

"Then ask Jesus into your heart."

"Ya."

"I'll pray for you, okay?"

"Yep...."

Moments later an excited four-year-old stands before his parents dripping wet, wearing... a smile. "Daddy, Mommy, guess what?"

"What, Stephen?"

"Jeffrey asked Jesus into his heart."

Jeffrey is one. You might say that he's a baby Christian.

* * *

"Rachael!" A few days have passed since Stephen claimed his first trophy. He is on a roll and he isn't about to stop now. Especially at mealtime. "Did you know that you've done bad things?"

"No." It is two-year-old Rachael's most common response.

"You have done sins," the four-year-old continues, undaunted.

"Haven't." Rachael is trying to stab a pea with a fork.

"Yes, you have."

"No. Haven't..."

"YES!"

"NO!"

"YEEEEEESSS YOU HAVE!" The witnesser throws part of a sesame seed bun at the witnessee. The bun misses. There are sesame seeds everywhere.

"Alright, Stephen. Come with me."

Down the hall we go, hand in hand. He is unsure of the consequences. I can't think of a thing to say. Kneeling down, I hold him tight. Ah, my son. The bare witness. "Don't throw things at your sister," is all I can think to say.

"Okay," he says, and wiggles free. "One more thing," I say, as he disappears around the corner. "You will sweep up those sesame seeds."

* * *

Evening has come. The children are tucked in. Mom is out with my VISA card and I am in bed reading. A little pyjama-clad figure with bare feet slowly pokes his head around the corner. "Hi," he says.

"Stephen, you should be asleep." My tone is unconvincing. He knows his father is a softy when it comes to bedtime.

"What are you eating?"

"Grapes."

"Are they good?"

"Come here and see." I pull down the covers and he crawls in. Grapes are better shared.

"What are you reading?" he asks, looking at a book I'm holding. A best-seller I don't read enough.

"It's the Bible. Do you want me to read to you?"

"Yep."

"I'm reading from a book called Matthew. Remember the song you like, 'I don't wanna be a Pharisee, 'cause they're not fair you see...?' Well, one of the Pharisees asked Jesus what He wanted him to do most of all. Do you know what Jesus said?"

"What?"

"He told him to love God with everything he had, and do you know what else?"

"What?"

"He told him to love others like he loved himself. Don't you think it's more important to love others than to just tell them about Jesus? You've been telling Rachael and Jeffrey about Jesus and that makes me glad. But they need to see how kind you are to them before they'll believe what you say about Jesus. Love them, Stephen. Grown-up Christians like to talk about contacts and souls. Sometimes we sort of throw buns too, but we don't talk very often about loving those who don't know Jesus. We need to love people until they ask us why."

My son has been silent. Undoubtedly he is impressed with my verbose rhetoric. I mean, let's face it. This has been pretty good stuff. I look over at him. His mouth is wide open, but not with awe. He is sound asleep. Perhaps all this advice was really meant for me.

Phil Callaway is the bestselling author of fifteen books and a popular speaker. Check out his website: www.philcallaway.ab.ca

Tuesday mornings in the kitchen

The closing of one needed resource opened many, many other doors

BY JANE DOCHERTY

Every Tuesday morning around 9:30 a.m., a group of people begin to gather in the kitchen at St. Andrew's, Owen Sound, Ont. We try not to be late so we can chatter about our week. What we have been up to, how the weather has been, what everyone's children and grandchildren are up to, where we have been this past week; rail at the price of gas, how to grow tomatoes, who is in the hospital, who is home from hospital; discuss local politics and upcoming concerts. We range in age from young children to seniors, and all are welcome, especially the best banana muffin maker in town. It really is the best time and we all look forward to it. Oh, yes, we gather to make sandwiches.

Last spring the local Salvation Army closed their soup kitchen. They felt their resources would be better spent concentrating on other outreach missions. They do so much in our community, men's hostel, food bank, two thrift stores, day care and elder care. The local ministerial association had been financially helpful but now it was time for them to be more involved. Quite a few ideas were discussed, such as getting a new location or starting a moveable feast by having downtown church's taking turns. A local church, The Victorious Living Centre, had a small lunch program for downtown folk already running and they soon found their numbers increasing. They are committed to feeding whoever is hungry. And will do so until Jesus comes. Our ministers felt until that time maybe the ministerial could help the VLC outreach and solve the soup kitchen dilemma. I approached as many local churches as possible, and now we have eight faith communities that deliver 12 loaves of sandwiches a day to the VLC.

I was in the grocery store (a place I seem to spend a great portion of my life) and was telling a friend about the fun we have making sandwiches on Tuesdays. She thought that was great except, it really wasn't about the people at St. Andrew's she said. It should be about the people we are feeding. I felt horrible. I was humbled in the produce section. I was thinking about us and not them. I went to my ministers and told them what she had said and how bad I felt. Scott Sinclair explained that it is very much about the fellowship around our kitchen table. God has brought us together for a reason and is present around the mixing of the eggs and the buttering of the bread. Ted Creen (we are blessed with two ministers) also felt that maybe God had a purpose in the closing of the soup kitchen. Now, all these churches are working together in our community for our community. I realized that's why those guys get the big bucks.



Billie Billings, Bill Currie, Jane Docherty, Shirley Berner, John Weiler, David Docherty, Jack Lewis, Sarah Currie, Ann Cox

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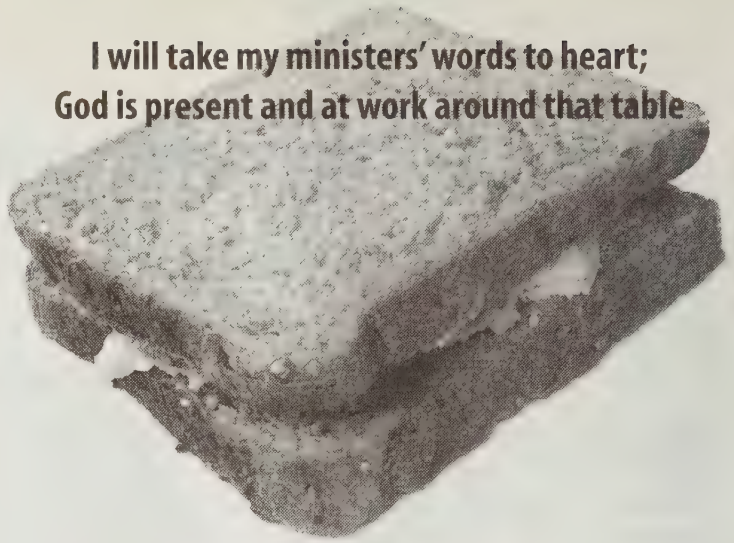
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It is true. God is present around that table. I bring my father every Tuesday. He has Alzheimer's and it progressed over the summer. But he butters bread with flair. He looks forward to Tuesdays and when I pull into Summit Place Lodge he is always waiting out front for me. My husband is a dairy farmer and when he had an opportunity for a week of holidays this summer we wanted to jump at the chance but I worried about my dad. He has become very dependant on me. It was wonderful folk around that kitchen table that phoned him daily, picked him up on Tuesday so he could make sandwiches and visited him. That would not have happened without the soup kitchen closing. When one of the Tuesday regulars (a man in charge of opening cans) had knee surgery, we sent him a present when he got home, a plate of sandwiches. We have a young man at our church who is married and they are on a fixed income. He does all the dishes every Tuesday and takes home sandwiches. (And bananas, he really likes bananas.) Dad and I deliver our sandwiches to the VLC. This is a faith community that we never would have known existed had it not been for the closing of the soup kitchen. The folk that eat our sandwiches greet us warmly and treat my dad with dignity. The Pastor invited all participating churches for an appreciation dinner in October. They have been in Owen Sound for five years or so and this will be the first time a lot of people have gone through their doors. That would not have happened without the soup kitchen closing. I have brought the 17-year-old princess (our daughter, maybe you are familiar with the personality type) with me and she has made sandwiches and helped delivery them. Never would have happened had the soup kitchen not closed.

I will take my ministers' words to heart. God is present and at work around that table. Yes, we are doing what Jesus taught in Matthew 25. (You know: The sheep and the goats parable, you fed me when I was hungry.) But we are also getting so much more than we ever imagined. What a wonderful gift from God, the closing of a soup kitchen!

Jane Docherty is a member at St. Andrew's, Owen Sound, Ont., where she feels very lucky to have grown up.



Pentatonic Horses

by Erin Woods

Who's that monotheistic manifestation
Our elders tell us we owe our adoration?
Lacking in psychopomps, we struggle on,
Seeking oracles, building our own Avalon.
With no metaphysical ology,
Can't comprehend our own doxology.

There are problems we're not solving
With a language that's evolving;
Understanding of the Word is almost gone.
We need a new translation for
A rising generation or
The Pentatonic Horses gallop on.

Humanity's all that has not yet become
Anthropomorphic; man's irony's son.
Deification is now hardly odd,
But there's no benevolent material God.
Perceived ecumenical iconoclasms,
Should our fathers have focused on far
deeper chasms?

There are problems we're not solving
With a language that's evolving;
Understanding of the Word is almost gone.
We need a new translation for
A rising generation or
The Pentatonic Horses gallop on.

Chronic megalomania affects the Western nations.
Playing God results in catastrophic confrontations.
Condescension mars the honest word Philanthropy;
Mendicants expect to hear "So what's in it for me?"
Twin mausoleums could still shock a jaded race,
So could ecclesiologists still show an unseen face?

There are problems we're not solving
With a language that's evolving;
Understanding of the Word is almost gone.
We need a new translation for
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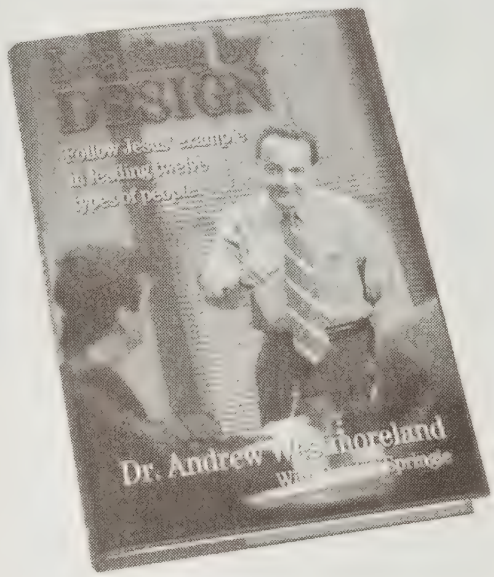
Erin Woods worships in North Bay, Ont. She wrote this song for her youth group band.

WWJD in the business world

Learning corporate strategies from Christ the CEO

BY OWEN THORNTON

Leading by Design
Dr. Andrew Westmoreland
Baxter Press: Friendswood, Texas.



Most people know the acronym WWJD stands for What Would Jesus Do. Dr. Andrew Westmoreland would add the two letters *IB* to that expression: What Would Jesus Do In Business.

According to Westmoreland, we enter the sacred world on Sundays and then leave it for the secular business world the rest of the week. However, in Presbyterian fashion he suggests we are all called to our profession. Therefore, we must take the sacred into the secular and do our best to communicate with others as Jesus did.

Westmoreland identifies 12 different types of personalities that can be challenging in a workplace. He agrees with secular business literature that different types of people must be treated differently. Westmoreland believes we can change our behavior towards others to create more successful outcomes.

The bulk of the book consists of 12 chapters dealing with these different types, such as eager, sneaky and negative and how we can modify their results. *Eager* Rudy, for example, was an okay football player whose eagerness (rather than size or talent) finally helped him enter the last play of the last game of his college eligibility.

Westmoreland then finds an example of Jesus' dealing with someone of a similar type. So, he cites the four eager men who cut the hole in the roof and lower their sick friend down to be healed. Jesus didn't focus on the destruction of the roof, but praised their faith and initiative. "Some of these people are hoping their enthusiasm and blind optimism will cover up their insecurities," says Westmoreland.

Once we understand the type, he then offers a way to measure our new strategy by suggesting how the person's behavior should be modified. "Prioritize the insights and skills you want to impart, and communicate them one at a time."

Though, Westmoreland's work is sound, there is little in this text that I didn't discover 15 years ago. And, I don't believe the examples from Jesus' life were originally meant to be teaching moments about effective business communication techniques. The Jesus element of this book feels like we're adding more pasta to the pot; there's more food but it still tastes the same.

With any material of this nature, I find several fundamental problems. First, isolating any one trait and modifying our behavior to alter a person's outcome is very difficult. People constantly move through a series of behaviors in different situations. Memorizing a complicated formula to treat a specific type feels tedious, contrived and somewhat dangerous, especially if we guess wrong.

Second, anyone plagued by a specific personality will find techniques to reduce their stress around them. But most of us have only one difficult person in our lives. This sound resource will rest on busy people's bookshelves with 11/12ths of it unread.

Third, even if we guess perfectly what's going on with our difficult person, most people will never apply this information. Why? Our difficult people frustrate us to the point of making our blood boil. And if they haven't angered us to that point, then their behavior has hurt us. Westmoreland says people don't change very much. This material requires we change our communication strategy. We must attempt to understand someone we dislike, leave our communication comfort zone, which increases our stress level, so we can utilize a contrived communication model in order to modify the outcome of our difficult person. Most people opt to either continue to duck down the side hall or, if forced to go toe-to-toe too often, simply leave the company.

There is a punchline to the book as well. The back pages offer the obligatory courses and order forms for more books. It begins to have the aroma of empire building such as Tony Robbins or Stephen Covey. What you cannot read in the fine print and can only find in the promotional material is that proceeds from the sale of *Leading Be Design* are designated to the Ouachia Baptist University Scholarship Fund. Westmoreland is the affable President of the university and his heart appears to be in the right place.

Owen Thornton is an elder at Westmount, London, Ont.

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obituaries

ASSELSTINE (nee MacLennan), Flora, was born on October 22, 1921 and passed away suddenly on October 23, 2005 as a result of an automobile accident. Her first husband was the late Hugh Paulin, the son of the Rev. Hugh M. Paulin, who served St. Andrew's Church, Windsor, Ont., from 1915 to 1952. Her second husband was the late Dr. Harold Asselstine. Flora was a lifetime member of St. Andrew's, Windsor. She was a long serving elder and had sung in the choir for 65 years.

CLARK, Isabelle, passed away on November 18, 2005. Elder, Clerk of Session and longtime member of Knox Presbyterian Church, Grand Valley, Ont.

DAMBROWITZ, Rev. Ivan Alexander, on May 9, 2005 in Dorchester, Ont., Rev. Ivan Dambrowitz, minister at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, New Liskeard, Ont., from 1994 to 2001, died in his sixty-third year with courage and grace surrounded by the love and care of his family and many friends. Rev. Dambrowitz was a graduate of Carleton University where he met his wife Cecelia. Upon graduating, both Ivan and Cecelia attended the Ontario College of Education in Kingston, Ont. Ivan was employed as a Teacher-Librarian at Kapuskasing High School, Ont., for the next twelve years while also engaging in his passion for farming.

Following a near-fatal car accident, Ivan felt a call to ministry. He graduated from Knox College and was minister at Chalmers Presbyterian Church in London, Ont., for 10 years and at Belmore-Bluevale near Wingham, Ont., for three years prior to coming to New Liskeard. He retired in 2001. Ivan served as moderator of presbytery for a term and took a strong interest in presbytery affairs even after retirement.

Ivan is survived by his wife Cecelia (nee Dunkin); children Christopher (Amy) and Timothy (Michelle); grandchildren Trenton, Katey and Ian; mother Jessie Dambrowitz; five sisters, four brothers and Goddaughter Tracey. He was predeceased by his father Ernie Dambrowtiz.

FOULIS, The Rev. Major Robert (Bob) John Patterson, passed away September 23, 2005, while traveling in France with his beloved wife Barbara. Bob was born in Quesnel, B.C. on May 18, 1938, son of Bob and Louise Foulis. Bob was a kind, generous and gentle man who enjoyed life with his family, friends, military colleagues and his church family. He will be greatly missed by all and especially by his wife Barbara. Bob and Barbara were married for 30 wonderful years.

Bob was a Presbyterian minister, social worker and a Chaplain in the Canadian Army Reserves. He was ordained as a Presbyterian minister and served at Whalley Presbyterian Church. He joined the Army Reserves as a Chaplain to the Royal Westminster Regiment, British Columbia Regiment and the 15th Field Artillery Regiment. He retired as a Major.

Bob went back to university and received his Masters of Social Work at UBC in 1972. His working career included positions at Colony Farm, Riverview; Forensic Clinic, Vancouver; UBC Psychiatry Department; Richmond Public Health; Delta Mental Health Clinic; and Whalley Mental Health Clinic. He retired from his work in Mental Health in August 2001.

He will be greatly missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him.

HARBOTTLE, Dorothy Emma, passed away on September 28, 2005 after a short illness. She was a lifelong member of The Presbyterian Church in Canada: 25 years in Conn, Ont., and 55 years in Arthur, Ont. She was an active participant in all areas of church life including an elder of 25 years, a Sunday School teacher, WMS member, choir member and part-time organist. She was a great witness of Christ to her neighbours, friends and cousins. She will be greatly missed for her caring nature and her many jokes.

HUTTON, Wm. F., M.D., FRCS (C) OB-GYN. Devoted longtime member of Westminster Presbyterian Church, Sault Ste. Marie, Ont. Passed away on July 7, 2004. Survived by wife Evelyn and son Gregory P. Hutton.

LEISHMAN, Phil, aged 91 died on October 17, 2005. Longtime elder and faithful servant of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.

MCLENNAN, Donald I, aged 83 died in Arnprior, Ont. on Friday, August 19, 2005. Longtime member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Arnprior, Ont. where he served on the Board of Managers and Property Committee. Much loved father of the Rev. Mark McLennan, Thunder Bay, Ont.

BACK ISSUES

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Unexpected, out of place and persistent

Come, Holy Spirit, and renew my soul and have mercy on me!

BY DAVID WEBBER



"What was that blood curdling scream Hon? You look ghastly, like you have just seen a ghost." Linda chuckled, peering at me over her reading glasses in that schoolmarmish way that turns on the schoolboy in me every time. The problem was I was so shocked by the trauma that I really didn't appreciate it very much.

"Some huge killer bird with an extremely bad sense of timing flew right from under my feet as I came around the wood pile. It departed with such a thunder that it took my hat right off. Oh, my poor aging bladder. I'll learn that bird a thing or two in just a minute." I spoke over my shoulder as I burned the rug for the bathroom.

A few minutes later, bladder relieved and dignity somewhat restored, Linda led me out of the house and pointed to a pine tree near the lake. "Is that the killer bird dear?" she asked.

Perched in the pine tree was a bird I hadn't seen since I was a juvenile delinquent harassing the wild citizens of the bunchgrass hills in the Rocky Mountain Trench. I used to spend a lot of time on horseback then and I will never forget the way that a flushing mourning dove could put the wind up my quarter horse. The other three-quarters of him would suddenly make like a twisting demon as he tried to plant me head first in the sand. The horse's only thought was to dump his load and escape for home where the birds were smart enough to act like poultry and focused on eggs and grasshoppers. But that was a thousand years ago and at least 480 kilometres south of the Cariboo-Chilcotin.

"Huh!" I said intelligently, "I haven't seen one of those since I was a kid trying to pick my sorry butt out of the sand to chase down my horse in the Kootenays. It's a mourning dove and about 200 kilometres too far north. Besides, what on earth is it doing here in the first week of January? Doesn't it know what a Cariboo winter is like?"

Almost like the weather person was eavesdropping, the next day it went to –37 degrees Celsius and hovered there for 3 weeks. During the day the mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*) kept feeding from the bird feeder droppings on the ground by the woodpile under our deck. At nights it wedged in between our hot tub and the wall of the

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house. Linda hunted up some hay and built a little nest for it there. The dove moved in like it was poultry, staying nigh on to the end of March. He was unexpected, out of place and persistent. And as I reflected upon it, he kind of reminded me of another dove at this time of the year.

We have just been through Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. I love the seasons of the church year. Their gift is that they help me to focus. The focus during Advent, Christmas and Epiphany, at least for us Protestant mainliners, seems to be on God the Father and God the Son. The Holy Spirit is kind of out of season, relegated to the corner of the church year called Pentecost. The Holy Spirit seems out of place and we don't expect much from him this time of year. But if you follow the more ancient traditional readings for this season, perhaps the tradition more influenced by Mark's Gospel which doesn't seem to see the relevance of a birth narrative, Epiphany is all about the Baptism of our Lord. And who shows up at the Baptism of our Lord, unexpected, out of place and persistent, but the Holy Spirit in the form of a Dove. And he does so by doing so in all four of the Gospels (Matt. 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:32). That kind of coverage isn't even given to the birth of Jesus.

Holy Spirit ... unexpected, out of place and persistent. Now that's an Epiphany I can get excited about. To be blunt, I am a little tired of We Three Kings Of Orient Are as the scriptural theme song for Epiphany. Perhaps because I came late to the Christian Faith, and only by happy accident was born into its Presbyterian expression, there is not much about Mainline Protestant traditions that I hold sacred. Oh sure, theologically I am Reformed through and through, but when it comes to liturgy and worship, the stuff of the church year, Linda describes me as an Eastern Orthodox High Church Pentecostal.

And so my Epiphany prayer this year is, Come, Holy Spirit. My desire is way and above an Epiphany of God that I can believe in. I thirst for an Epiphany of God that will get on me like a dove on Jesus, one that will come into my life and get involved in the tangle there, bringing the same power that



Lord, if it be not spring time in my chilly heart, I pray thee make it so, for I am heartily weary of living at a distance from thee

was bought on the chaos of the face of the deep at creation. I look forward to an unexpected, out of place and persistent manifestation of God in my life, an Epiphany where the Holy Spirit of God will blow over the face of the deep darkness of my winter soul. I yearn for the kind of Epiphany that C.H. Spurgeon prayed for: "Let our wintry state suffice us for coldness and indifference; when the Lord creates a spring within, let our sap flow with vigour, and our branch blossom with high resolve. O Lord, if it be not spring time in my chilly heart, I pray thee make it so, for I am heartily weary of living at a distance from thee. Oh! the long and dreary winter, when wilt thou bring it to an end? Come, Holy Spirit, and renew my soul! quicken thou me! restore me, and have mercy on me! This very night I would earnestly implore the Lord to take pity upon his servant, and send me a happy revival of spiritual life!"

Rev. David Webber is a contributing editor to the *Record*. He is a minister of the Cariboo, B.C. house church ministry. His most recent book is *Like a Winter's Aspen: Embracing the Creator's Fire*.

Discovering possibilities for themselves

Vision, innovation and outreach sparks growth in Brampton

BY AMY MACLACHLAN

The Presbytery of Brampton, encompassing areas west and north of Toronto, is an eclectic mix of geography, history, demographics, characteristics and congregation size. Its 30 charges (and 34 congregations) make it one of the largest presbyteries in the national church, and with only four vacancies, its ability to attract ministers seems solid. And although its congregations see a huge range of Sunday attendance from 330 at Knox, Oakville, to 24 at Limehouse, the overall picture is one of general stability. In fact, between 2003 and 2004, membership jumped from 4,949 to 5,323, while both adherents and attendance increased at similar rates.

Needless to say, the presbytery has benefited from the growth of its communities, as Mississauga, Brampton, Oakville and Milton keep ushering in new people. However, not all can be classified as traditionally Presbyterian—bringing ethnic rather than British descent into the mix.

"There's a blending of cultures and we celebrate that and, as much as we can, weave that into the fabric of the congregation," said Rev. Ian McWhinnie, minister at Glenbrook, Mississauga. McWhinnie said although his congregation is predominantly white, there are numerous other cultures represented there, and more are anticipated as the community continues to expand.

The presbytery has risen to the increasingly frequent challenge of multiculturalism by starting two ethnic congregations—a Chinese congregation and Almanarah, an Arabic congregation. Mississauga Chinese completed the first phase of its building project last summer, and Almanarah is only about a year old and has already bought land for a future building. As it caters to a distinct group, many members of the congregation commute from outside the area to attend.

According to the website for Trafalgar, Oakville, their worship music "is as diverse as the congregation. It includes hymns, global songs, Taizé prayers, contemporary and folk music, African American spirituals and jazz." The church hosts an annual international night, where they enjoy food and music from around the world, and holds an annual worship service featuring the choir of Ugandan Martyrs Church in Toronto.



Trafalgar Church, Oakville, helped build a learning centre in Uganda and maintains a relationship with the people there.

It has most recently embraced a project inspired by congregation member and elder, Dr. Joyce Nsubuga—an epidemiologist and public health worker. This initiative has seen the development and construction of a library/learning centre for youth in a small Ugandan village. The learning centre is a community-based effort that helps young people complete secondary school, offers training in family care, health and AIDS prevention, and teaches trades.

Rev. Pieter van Harten, presbytery clerk and minister at Knox, Acton, said the growth in the presbytery's numbers isn't only a result of growing communities. Numerous new ministers have brought new energy and ideas and many long-established ministers are looking to possibilities for the future. "We've had a few challenges but we're seeing the end of it," said van Harten, mentioning the need to close several small congregations in the last few years. "On the whole, we're more stable than many."

He said that despite an increase in surrounding non-Christian neighbourhoods, many Mississauga and Oakville congregations are growing. In his own church, he has been helping the congregation see other possibilities for their ministry, including moving to more contemporary worship. "It was a traditional congregation when I arrived here," he said, which was 10 years ago. "They need to discover for themselves what the possibilities are for the future."

North Bramalea's newly-inducted minister Grant Johnston was an appointee there for about 16 years until the congregation was able to call him to a permanent position. St. David's, Campbellville and Nassagaweya, Campbellville, were recently able to become independent congregations after being linked for many years. They each have their own minister.

And at Knox, Grand Valley, Rev. Ron Archer has filled a hole that has existed for 17 years—the length of time since the congregation last called a minister. The small town of 1,600 has 11 churches, and Archer serves two of them, Knox and the local United

PHOTO: DR. JOYCE NSUBUGA

'Norval is so beautiful now that it takes my breath. Those pine hills full of shadows, those river reaches, those bluffs of maple and smooth-trunked beech with drifts of wild white blossom everywhere. I love Norval as I have never loved any place save Cavendish'

Church. Others are interested in the initiative. Van Harten was at the induction ceremony, and said the "whole town came out" to welcome Archer.

Although Archer has only been there for a few months, the two congregations are already holding joint services and are looking for more ways to cooperate. "I hope there will be a greater understanding between the two denominations," he said. "That's the critical thing—getting to know each other and sharing projects."

The small community has a history of helping each other, and Archer was told his ministry is to focus on community outreach. He said the churches operate a food bank for the entire community, recently held an ecumenical fundraiser to help out a local man who was seriously injured in an accident, and only two weeks after the tsunami last winter, the churches organized a community event that raised thousands of dollars for relief. "I'm amazed at the number of things they already do within the village," said Archer. "It's astounding. I never would have guessed."

Archer is currently planning a special program throughout 2006 on the spiritual and physical qualities of water. The 2004 General Assembly adopted a document on the importance of water and the right of all people to have access to it. As Grand Valley is located at the headwaters of Lakes Ontario and Huron, Archer's congregations recognize the "terrific importance" of water to their community and others, and have asked to learn more about this resource.

St. Andrew's, Brampton, established in 1877, attracts about 325 people to worship on Sundays, making it is one of the presbytery's largest congregations. They recently hired an associate minister for children, youth and families, responding to the growing numbers in the church. Last year, they began a food ministry, which supplies meals to anyone in the congregation who has recently had an illness, a surgery, a new baby or a death in the family. The church also houses a food cupboard, which distributes food and needed supplies to about 90 of Brampton's less fortunate on a weekly basis.

North Bramalea also operates a food bank for local families in need, and it boasts the Five Talents Group, a group of artists within the congregation who donate their work to support the church. During the holiday season, they donated original hand-painted Christmas cards.

Knox, Oakville, was established in 1833, when about 12 people gathered in a small wooden building for a service led by a travelling minister. Decades later, the congregation has grown to be the presbytery's largest. One congregational endeavour is Stephen Ministries, which helps meet the needs of individuals who are going through life changes such as hospitalization, bereavement, unemployment, divorce, or becoming a new parent. Stephen Ministries was founded 25 years ago in St. Louis, Mo., and serves more than 8,000 congregations worldwide.

Glenbrook, Mississauga, is part of a shared ministry with an Anglican parish. Rev. McWhinnie said the relationship is a good one, but growth in both congregations calls for new directions. For the past five years, Glenbrook has been planning to move to a new plot of land, and build a 15,000 sq. ft. church for about 300 people. With a current Sunday attendance of about 140, the congregation is planning for continued growth. "We're stepping out in faith," said McWhinnie. "It's our mustard seed vision."

McWhinnie attributes some of the increased attendance to the congregation's blend of worship styles. Opting to combine traditional and contemporary rather than holding two separate services has worked well at Glenbrook. "We've been intentional in that, right up to our leadership," he said. "This is who we are, and it's the direction we want to go."

Big cities and multicultural congregations aren't the presbytery's only story. Mid-sized towns like Georgetown and Milton on the outskirts of urban areas, and small, rural places like Inglewood, Erin and Orangeville, also have an important part to play.

Norval Church began in the 1830s, and was linked with Union Presbyterian Church in Georgetown shortly thereafter—a relationship that continues today. Between 1926 and 1935, Rev. Ewen Macdonald—husband to author Lucy Maud Montgomery—was minister of the charge. Montgomery wrote five novels in the Norval manse.

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"Norval is so beautiful now that it takes my breath," she wrote. "Those pine hills full of shadows, those river reaches, those bluffs of maple and smooth-trunked beech with drifts of wild white blossom everywhere. I love Norval as I have never loved any place save Cavendish." (*The Selected Journal of L.M. Montgomery, Volume III: 1921-1929*)

Knox, Georgetown, officially began in 1860. The church operates a dial-in service for people who can't make it to Sunday service, but still want to listen to worship. Numerous home-hosted bible studies also exist, and the KEO (Know Each Other) program is a fun way to meet new people and get to know existing members better. Knox is linked with Limehouse, established in 1832. The original, wood-framed building still stands, and the church's historic cemetery remains an active burial ground.

Tweedsmuir Memorial, Orangeville, was built in 1941, but the history goes back much further. It began with Rev. Duncan McMillan, a pioneer clergyman who travelled to Orangeville in 1837 to preach to families in their homes. Today, the congregation is about 145-strong on Sunday. Every other week, the church's praise team sings contemporary songs, teaching the congregation new songs as they go. They also order fair trade coffee for interested members and for use in church. Tweedsmuir also supports a Canadian Foodgrains Bank project. In 2005, they grew and sold pumpkins and gourds as an added fundraiser to the grain they have been growing and donating for the past seven years.

The Presbytery of Brampton has been through some difficult times when closing small congregations in recent years. Van Harten remembers preaching the final communion service of one condemned church—to which five people showed up. "It was preposterous to carry on," he said.

Having gone through this purge, the presbytery's future looks bright. "We have some extremely successful and growing congregations," said van Harten, adding that even the smaller congregations are holding their own. And as the presbytery continues to grow, both in size and vision, it seems such success will continue.

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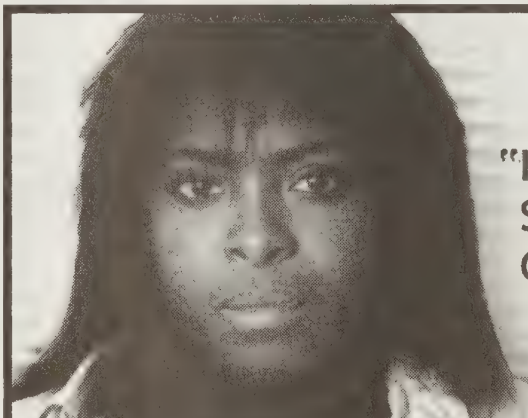
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Sarnia, Paterson Memorial; Interim Minister to begin April 2006; Rev. Terry Samuel, PO Box 587, Bright's Grove, ON N0N 1C0; 519-542-2253; terry.samuel@sympatico.ca.

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Children in northern Malawi carrying bags of maize. The maize will be pounded into flour to make nsima (a thick porridge). Nsima is a staple of the Malawian diet.

CARL HIEBERT, PWS&D

Not Forgotten

Poor rains, a lack of seed and fertilizer, and the impact of HIV/AIDS, have left people in Malawi facing a severe food crisis once again. The United Nations has estimated that 5 million people in the country will need food aid.

PWS&D is working with our church partners to provide immediate and long term food relief over the next year. Special attention will be given to improving and sustaining the nutritional levels of children under the age of five. Likuni Phala, (a fortified porridge) and maize (corn) are being distributed to those most in need right now, especially malnourished children under the age of five. We are also working on longer-term development projects to minimize losses due to drought and to improve agriculture. After the initial relief phase, families will be provided with seeds and fertilizer to ensure that harvest yields will be adequate next season. Farmers are also being trained in crop and livestock management, and storing their harvest

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Inductions, Ordinations and Recognitions

July 10, 2005 Ordination of Angela J. Cluney, West River Presbyterian Church, Durham, NS

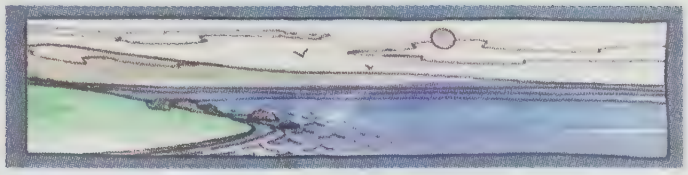
September 25, 2005 Induction of Angela J. Cluney as Associate Minister of Christian Education, Leaside Presbyterian Church, Toronto, ON

November 10, 2005 Induction of Rev. Joye Platford as minister of Riverside, Medicine Hat, AB

called to wonder

CREATED BY JENNIFER O'FARRELL

FOLLOW!



As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen.

And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people."

And immediately they left their nets and followed Jesus.



Follow the pathway of fish.

Move horizontally or vertically through the fishnet maze.

Avoid snakes, frogs, seahorses, and shells.

Far and wide
Over and under
Loving, living
Laughing, singing
On and beside
With Jesus

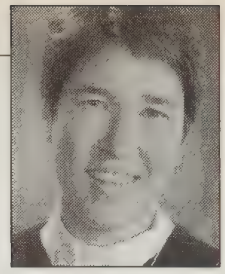
Write your own **FOLLOW** poem or prayer.

As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets.

Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed Jesus. (Mark 1: 16-20)

To learn more about God's messages, go online at www.presbyterianrecord.ca/wonder

Jean Morris



Catholic, Protestants unite

Where two or more are gathered in his name, he is there

The theme of the 131st General Assembly in Edmonton was Claiming the Joy of our Faith. As Moderator, visiting with congregations, agencies and organizations connected to our church I see signs of joy in the life and witness of our church all the time. One of the joys we can claim is the gift of being catholic Protestants, in that our understanding of the church catholic is to be part of the world wide, universal church of Jesus Christ. As those who confess our faith in the holy catholic church, and as part of the Reformed family, we are catholic Protestants.

During the past seven months, I have had many occasions to reflect on and celebrate the vitality and effectiveness of ecumenical partnerships. At the local level, churches of various denominations are working together in areas of mission and outreach that express gospel ministry in their communities. Initiatives such as shared Vacation Bible School, ministries with people who are homeless, joint youth programs, support for women's shelters, and ecumenical chaplaincies are some of the ways that Canadian Presbyterians are joining in ministry with other Christians in their neighbourhoods. There is joy in the relationships that are built and in the shared purpose of these ministries.

At national and international levels, ecumenical partnerships demonstrate the effectiveness of Christians working together and The Presbyterian Church in Canada is a leader in many of these coalitions. In October, KAIROS—Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives—a coalition of 11 churches and religious organizations, began its national campaign in Ottawa to raise awareness of the global inequities of access to clean, safe water. Our church, in partnership with others, is urging governments to recognize water as a human right to be managed and shared wisely.

In response to the many devastating disasters in our world over the last year, we have partnered with other Christian denominations in securing aid to respond to the needs. A unified presence of Christians articulating the needs, and providing strategies to address them, has resulted in a more timely and thorough response from government and other funding agencies.

Dialogue in order to learn and deepen relationships is a mark of the joy of ecumenism

January brings us the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. This year's theme is "Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." (Mt 18:20) The underlying themes of this text address dimensions of authentic Christian community. The first is to encourage and strengthen the fellowship of God's people in small communities as well as in great gatherings, in daily life as well as in official, liturgical celebrations. Secondly, the text includes Peter's discussion with Jesus about forgiveness. There is much in our relationships now, and in our history as Christians, which calls for repentance and forgiveness.

Many Presbyterians across Canada will gather for worship and study with other Christians during the week of January 18-25. Aware of our interdependence as the body of Christ, may we trust in the power of common prayer and in the abiding presence of Christ within the community who gathers in his name. As catholic Protestants, it is my prayer that the spirit of ecumenism, and the joy of being part of the much larger Christian community, would be present in our discipleship throughout the year.

On February 2 and 3 it will be my joy to represent The Presbyterian Church in Canada at the annual conference of Canadian Church Leaders in Mississauga. This gathering provides opportunity for dialogue and deepening of mutual understanding.

Dialogue in order to learn and deepen relationships is a mark of the joy of ecumenism. Being in relationship is not always easy and dialogue can turn to debate. But healthy debate or discussion that leads to new or greater understanding is worth the effort. As Presbyterians, we treasure the distinctiveness that we bring to the Christian Church, and we claim the joy of the biblical faith we hold in common with the whole Christian family. Through respectful relationships with Christians near and far, we respond to Christ's prayer for unity, to the Holy Spirit's call to renew the church, to witness to the one body of Christ into which we have been baptized. By respectful dialogue, shared worship and witness, we catholic Presbyterians are claiming and proclaiming the joy of our faith.



MODERATOR'S ITINERARY

January

8 – 14	Guatemala, International Ministries
22	Varsity Acres, Calgary
29	First, Regina



This photograph was taken following a morning worship service with an ecumenical group of Ministers who were completing their Military Chaplain Training program at Camp Borden.

The Moderator brought the greetings of the General Assembly, and also met with Presbyterian Chaplains who had gathered for her visit. Pictured with the Moderator is Colonel David C. Kettle, Director of Chaplaincy Administration, Education and Training for the Canadian Forces, and Alan McPherson, Presbyterian representative to the Interfaith Committee on Canadian Military Chaplaincy.

Cover artwork contest

Please visit **www.presbyterianrecord.ca** to enter an online ballot for a chance to win this framed, limited edition artwork, commissioned exclusively by the ***Record*** for the December issue and signed by the artist.

Deadline is **February 28, 2006**.



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PRESBYTERIAN Record

February 2006



The Marriage Planner

What love and faith have to do with each other

ALSO:

Portrait of a traditional marriage

Marriage Quiz

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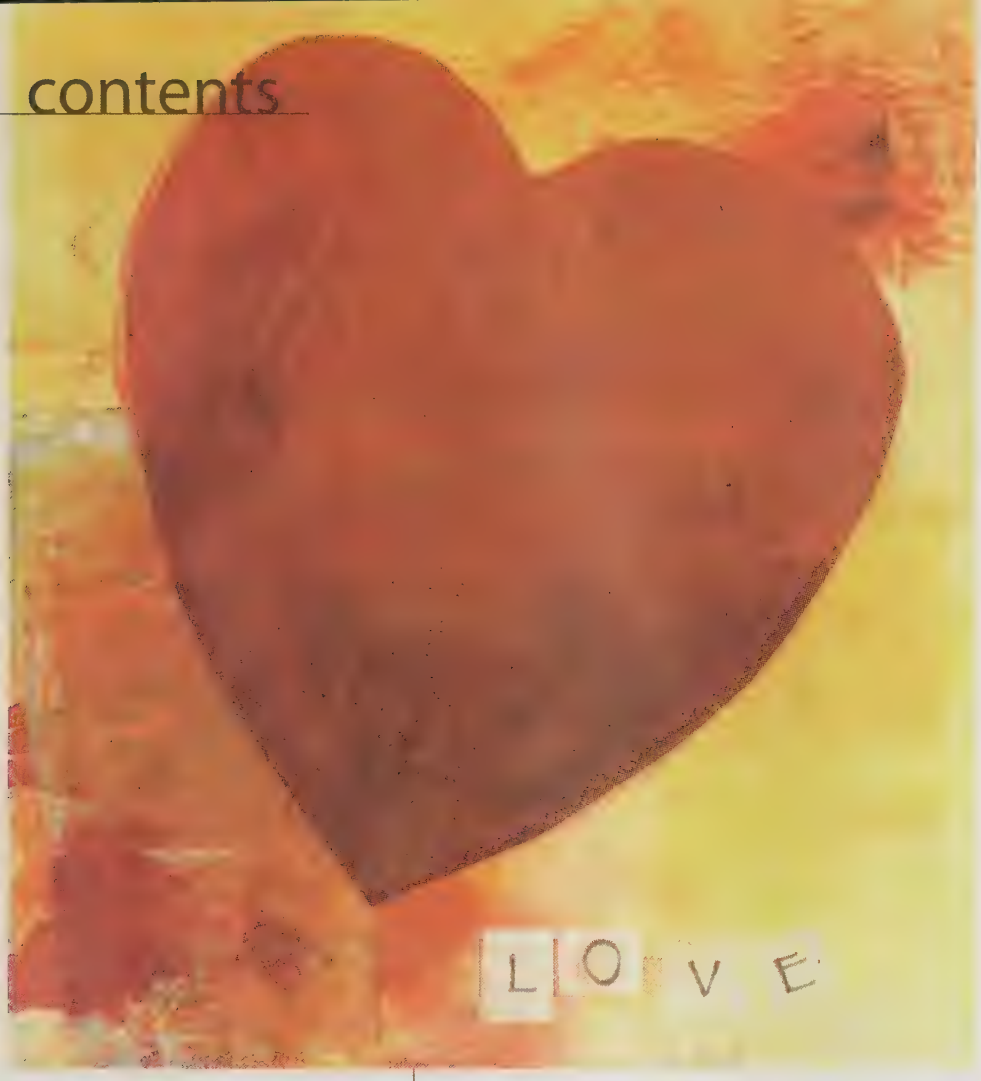
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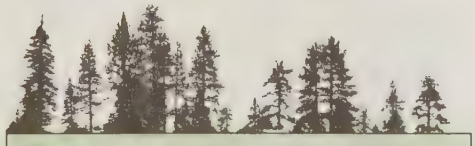
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David Harris



Don't squirm—but God loves you!

Recently at church the preacher was expounding on the baptism of Jesus in the context of four infant baptisms. She pointed out that parents' love for their children begins even before they are born, then blossoms at birth, even though infants cannot possibly return that love.

This is unconditional love, she said: love that is unmerited and unrelated to any of the activities of the recipient. Babies are loved simply because they are.

God expressed such unconditional love for Jesus at his baptism. Jesus had not yet done anything besides his carpentry: no healings or other miracles, no teaching, no crucifixion. Yet the voice said, "This is my well-beloved son! I am very pleased with him."

Then the preacher took a bold step for a Canadian congregation. She warned them it might make them squirm but asked people to turn to the person next to them and, using their Christian name, to say: "Name, you are well-loved and God is very pleased with you."

It was a powerful moment. People beamed, some with tears in their eyes. Why don't we do this every Sunday? Are the words that God loves us so powerful that we can't bear to hear them?

Too often we pay lip service to God's unconditional love, then begin piling up conditions to contain that love. From such a perspective, a history of Christianity looks more like a preoccupation with sin and divine judgment than with love and divine redemption.

One might make a plausible case that the growth of New Age religions and self-help philosophies is rooted in reaction to the negative perceptions about humanity that Christians have permitted and often fostered.

Oprah Winfrey is not popular because she's wittier or cleverer than other television stars but because she tells viewers that they are essentially good and don't deserve bad things happening to them.

It's true that as we grow older, we learn right and wrong from our parents and others. But that shouldn't come at the expense of unconditional love. Study after study has shown most criminals come from families where they were never loved and supported.

That fact seemed lost during the recent federal election. Although violent crime is decreasing, recent high-profile shootings in Toronto—one of the safest places in Canada—had all party leaders promising to get tough on crime.

Thankfully, God does not treat us this way. Certainly, we need to protect innocents from known criminals, but that is like trying to bolt the barn door too late. The more energy we put into lowering poverty and prejudice in our world, the less violence we are likely to face in the first place.

It's easy to say, "God loves me" glibly. How amazing to say it and mean it.

* * *

Tangible expressions of love abound in the church, no more so than in Presbyterians' support for international development work and the *Record*. Preliminary figures show that giving to Presbyterian World Service and Development rose to more than approximately $4 million from about $2.5 million in 2004.

At the *Record*, part of our job is to bring you as many of these stories associated with the mission and development agencies of the church as possible. Publishing a magazine is expensive: printing and postage have increased, as has the cost of travel as energy prices rise.

Traditionally our two sources of revenue have been subscription sales and advertising. Declining membership and overall declining circulation in print publications in North America pose serious challenges for us, especially as advertisers move almost exclusively to large media conglomerates.

To help offset rising costs and diminishing revenue, we launched our first financial appeal in the fall. The results were amazing and hugely heartening.

In all, more than 2,000 donors contributed over $90,000 to the appeal; many sent encouraging notes that were much appreciated. Your support will help us to provide you with more and better national and international coverage of the work of the Presbyterian Church and its ecumenical and development partners around the world.

Thank you!

David Harris

letters

Directors need integrity

Re Watching The Directors, January

I was astonished to read the assertion that two key areas determine the strength of a board: independence from management and access to detailed and timely reports. No board will be strong unless it is comprised of directors with relevant expertise and integrity, regardless of their independence or the number of reports they receive from management. Unfortunately, expertise is difficult to measure, and integrity even more so, so good governance indices (such as the Board-Shareholder Confidence Index referred to) are of limited value.

It was also disappointing to see controversial guidelines issued by the Canadian Coalition for Good Governance being quoted without comment, such as those urging corporate board members to own a minimum number of shares in the company. While the stated reason is that their own investments will be on the line, in practice this would result in the directors—particularly audit committee members—being motivated to delay or suppress bad news that could drive down the share price.

The related article Is Christ Your Financial Advisor? overstates the role of churches in the beginnings of corporate social responsibility, with reference being made to the establishment of the Task Force on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility in 1975. A considerable amount was written about CSR in the early 1970s, and in 1975 Prof. S. R. Maxwell and I conducted a study of how it had affected Canada's 125 largest corporations. No fewer than 94 per cent of the responding corporations stated that it was the philosophy of the company's officers that had led to the consideration of CSR by the corporation—a very much higher percentage than any other factor, including the 23 per cent who referred to "criticisms by activist groups" (which would include the churches).

Prof. Alister Mason
Waterloo, Ont.

Funding for faith-based schools predates country

Re To Fund Or Not To Fund, November

The origins of state aid to Roman Catholic separate schools in Ontario dates (at least) to the 1863 Separate School Act, which established a share of municipal and provincial grants for the operation of such schools up to grade 10. This act, following an earlier similar one in Quebec, formed the basis of separate (or dissentient) schooling in these two regions, the principles of which were later enshrined in Section 93 of the1867 Constitution Act that gave religious minorities (Catholic or Protestant) in any province joining Confederation the legal right to separate schooling where numbers warrant.

The year 1985 is significant in this context primarily because it marked the first year in which full public funding was extended to Roman Catholic Separate high schools to the end of grade 13, a decision that some argue led to the defeat of the then Conservative government of Bill Davis in the next provincial election. Incidentally, it is also the year Bernard Shapiro (now the Federal Ethics Commissioner) submitted his Report of the Royal Commission on Private Schools in Ontario that recommended against any form of direct public funding to independent schools.

Newfoundland was unique in Canada in sustaining a denominationally pluralistic system of tax-supported separate boards and schools for the Pentecostal, Seventh Day Adventist and Catholic denominations, plus, from 1969, an Integrated Board representing Anglican, United, Presbyterian, Moravian and Salvation Army faiths. All this ended officially in 1998 following a provincial referendum the previous year that supported the abolition of the denominational system of schooling for a single public (secular) one, and the necessary Constitutional amendment.

Only three provinces—Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario—maintain the dual system (Public and Separate)

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and of these, Ontario alone provides no direct funding to registered private schools (religious or secular).

I sympathize with the growing number who see Ontario's continued funding of one faith-based school system, the RC Separate, to the exclusion of all other faith-based schools, as profoundly unfair particularly in a multicultural society that professes to value diversity (within a wider common framework to be sure) and in light of a Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982) that re-affirms the principle of fairness.

The charges opponents typically bring against state aid to registered private schools—e.g., that they are socially divisive, foster intolerance, practice indoctrination and pose an economic drain on the public system—are arguably weak; and in the experiences of Alberta, Saskatchewan, as well as B.C., Manitoba, and Quebec which all provide various levels of direct funding, these charges have not been born out.

Douglas Stewart
Regina

Touched by a life

While writing my book, *A Different Road*, I asked for and received permission to use material re autism from author Elizabeth Bloomfield. When published, I sent Ms. Bloomfield a complimentary copy of my book, which is a biography of my autistic son. Ms. Bloomfield then shared with me an interview her son had had with his facilitator, Andrew Foster, on the subject of spirituality (*Record*, May 05). I was emotionally moved both by Andrew's concepts of the meaning of spiritual matters and his expressions of his need to connect to, and to be understood by others through his poetry. I wished that I had had these insightful thoughts from this obviously remarkable man to incorporate in my book.

One never knows how lives touch other lives. I am grateful that Andrew Bloomfield has touched mine.

Lauren Haynes
Murfreesboro, Tenn.

A letter about the letters

As an avid reader of these letters I can count on being exposed to an array of thought provoking and divergent views:

Letter writer Cal Withers felt "scolded" by editor David Harris. J. E. Vallance criticized the church for criticizing teens. Rev. Alan Stewart said the editorial staff was "blatantly unaware of gender issues" and wants an answer as to why boys are excluded from the covers of the *Record*. The question escapes me.

Paul Marshall says the Presbyterian Church he attends "is dying." Rev. H. L. Wipprecht observes that the United Church is "shrinking away". Both astute comments. Alasdair Coats remarks that a "parishioner" whose beliefs are unlike his should go to a different church, his Christianity suspect. Dr. John Carr said we should learn from homosexuals how "God is present in their lives."One thing is constant. Opposing views are prevalent and moot, but perceived by some as dichotomous. Namely, the male, the female, the old guard, the young turks, the hawks, the doves, the liberals, the conservations, the believers, the atheists, ad infinitum. These opposites are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but open to interpretation and helpful in establishing ones own evolving personal philosophy. Scripture implores us to "judge not" and to be mindful of the greatest commandment of all, "to love."

J. Gordon Neal
Whitby, Ont.

Saints and sinners

Re Stop Whispering, Start Shouting, September

I play in a few bands and have found that there are a great number of crossover songs that fit both sacred and secular meanings, which when used sensitively can bring a greater sense of joy to both church and non-church alike. From Simon and Garfunkel there are many examples, but *Bridge Over Troubled Waters* is the strongest. From the category of Young Country, *I'm Movin' On* by Rascall Flatts or *I Hope You Dance* by Lee Ann Womack fit the bill.



REM's *Everybody Hurts* is quite meaningful; as is *Free* by Burton Cummings.

In our area the Fiddling Service has become helpful to worshippers, when both hymns and fiddle tunes are used.

In the jazz quartet in which I play (called Saints 'n' Sinners, with two ministers and two lay members) we often combine both secular and sacred in the same tune: *While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks By Night* with *Swinging Shepherd Blues*.

The use of crossover tunes brings to worship and to community events both a sense of meaning and a beat that connotes joy in the Lord. In my part-time work at Kilmaurs, near Ottawa, this approach has even helped in attendance and commitment.

I'm not familiar with Radiohead but I will tune in to them. Our Moderator also spoke about this issue with Green Day, one of my son's favourite bands.

Rev. Larry Paul
Perth, Ont.

Lewis pilgrimage

There is in Toronto an active C.S. Lewis Society. We meet four times a year and we have an informative magazine, *Pilgrimage*.

For more information please write: Mrs. Margaret McLaughlin, #1204, Old Mill Towers, 39 Old Mill Road, Etobicoke, M8X 1G6.

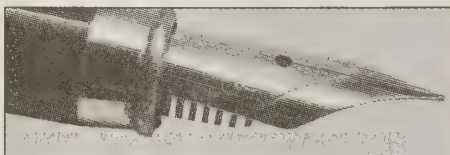
Olive R. Anstice
Toronto

Correction

As reader Margaret MacDonald pointed out: Tom Harpur's book, reviewed in June, is called *The Pagan Christ—Recovering the Lost Light*. A typographical error had the title as Rediscovering the Lost Light, which as Ms. MacDonald noted, "changes the meaning of the book."

Apology

Several advertisements in the December issue of the *Record* contained typographical glitches that were due to a computer software problem. We apologize.



The *Presbyterian Record* welcomes letters to the editor. Please include your name, home address and a daytime telephone number. We reserve the right to edit all letters for length and clarity.

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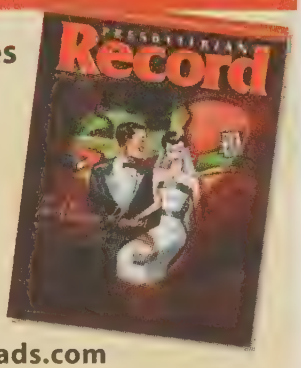
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Marion Wilson, the first female elder and long-time member of St. Paul's, Ingersoll, Ont., prepares to go for a motorcycle ride with Dave Moyer. The ride was just one of the items available at the semi-annual Talents and Treasures Auction held at St. Paul's. Other items up for auction were various homemade goodies, a rose arbour, horse compost for gardens and weekends at cottages. The auction raised over $10,000.



It's not always about the big events and celebrations — sometimes it's just about celebrating the regular events we take for granted. Here the session of Knox, Halifax, prepares for the sacrament of Holy Communion. Back, Donald MacKenzie, Audrey Croft, Ron Tullock. Front, Paul Llewelyn, Debbie Lyver, Jean Dunn, Doug Campbell. Absent, Clarence Croft, clerk of session.

HAD CAKE LATELY? Share your celebrations with the rest of the Church. Send your stories to PnP@presbyterianrecord.ca along with your digital photographs, 300 dpi minimum, high quality JPEGs. Or mail the photographs to: The Record, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, M3C 1J7.

To be considered for People and Places, photographs should be sharp and everyone clearly identified. The *Record* reserves the right to reject any photos not of sufficient quality. Photographs cannot be returned.

For more People & Places submissions please visit our website: www.presbyterianrecord.ca



Rev. Timothy Bruneau celebrated the first anniversary of his ordination in October, along with his wife, Kelly, at First, New Westminster, B.C.



GOLDEN GIRLS

1. Jeanette McLaren has been a lifelong member of St. George's, London, Ont., and celebrated her 101st birthday there in September. She served her church as a Sunday School teacher, through Canadian Girls in Training and the Women's Mission Society. The retired teacher, and widow, still lives in her home and attends worship regularly.

2. Annie Sippel has been a member of the Presbyterian Church for over 80 years, and also a life member of the Women's Mission Society, through Knox, Embro, Ont. Last October her congregation, along with family and friends, honoured her 100th birthday. The retired nurse now lives in Tavistock, Ont.

3. Mildred Flett joined New Westminster, Hamilton, Ont., in 1927, and was in the choir for 70 years. She is also a life member of the Women's Mission Society. In September she celebrated her 97th birthday — in the Presbyterian fashion, with a cake and flowers, surrounded by her church and family and friends.









With only three days notice, 52 volunteers from St. Giles, Ottawa, provided dinner for 250 Kashechewan Cree, who had been evacuated from their James Bay homes. "We heard some of their impressions of Ottawa," writes Jean Currie. "'Everything is tall, the buildings and the trees are so high. Escalators and elevators are fun. Everything is so cheap, in Ottawa you can buy a newspaper for a dollar!' One lad wanted to go home because he missed his dad who had remained on the reserve."

Evangel Hall theft

A THIEF STOLE, altered and cashed a cheque for nearly $200,000 from Evangel Hall that should have gone to the Presbyterian Church, according to a story in the *Globe and Mail*.

The money was a quarterly payment to the church for covering Evangel Hall's payroll, said executive director Joseph Taylor. Evangel Hall is a Toronto inner-city mission.

Police said there is no description of the thief to release to the public, suggesting that a camera was not running or that the record was erased. The investigation is ongoing.

Taylor said the bank reimbursed Evangel Hall and the payment to the church has been made. – *AM*

Churches continue aid efforts

The Presbyterian Church continues to help rebuild the many areas devastated in 2005. The following are updates on four supported by Presbyterian World Service and Development:

MALAWI With matching funds from the Canadian International Development Agency, PWS&D and the Canadian Foodgrains Bank have provided $500,000 to feed over 2,000 families in northern Malawi for six months and are working to provide 4,000 farming families with fertilizer, maize, groundnut (peanut) and soy seed and cassava cuttings. Five hundred families will also receive a goat to help them increase their food security. PWS&D has also contributed $34,000 to Action by Churches Together to help provide food and seed to other struggling families.

DARFUR, SUDAN As human rights violations continue, PWS&D's partner, Action by Churches Together is working to provide healthcare, clean water, sanitation, nutrition and education to families in refugee camps.

CENTRAL AMERICA Development partners in Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua are working to provide food, clothing, water, sanitation and housing for those affected by Hurricane Stan. The Foodgrains Bank is helping communities survive until new crops can be harvested.

SOUTH ASIA ACT is providing food, shelter, water and sanitation in earthquake-stricken communities in Pakistan and Indian-administered Kashmir. More than $1 million has been raised by the church from various funding sources. – *with files from PWS&D*

Searching for peace

The first step is to bring peace to those we meet

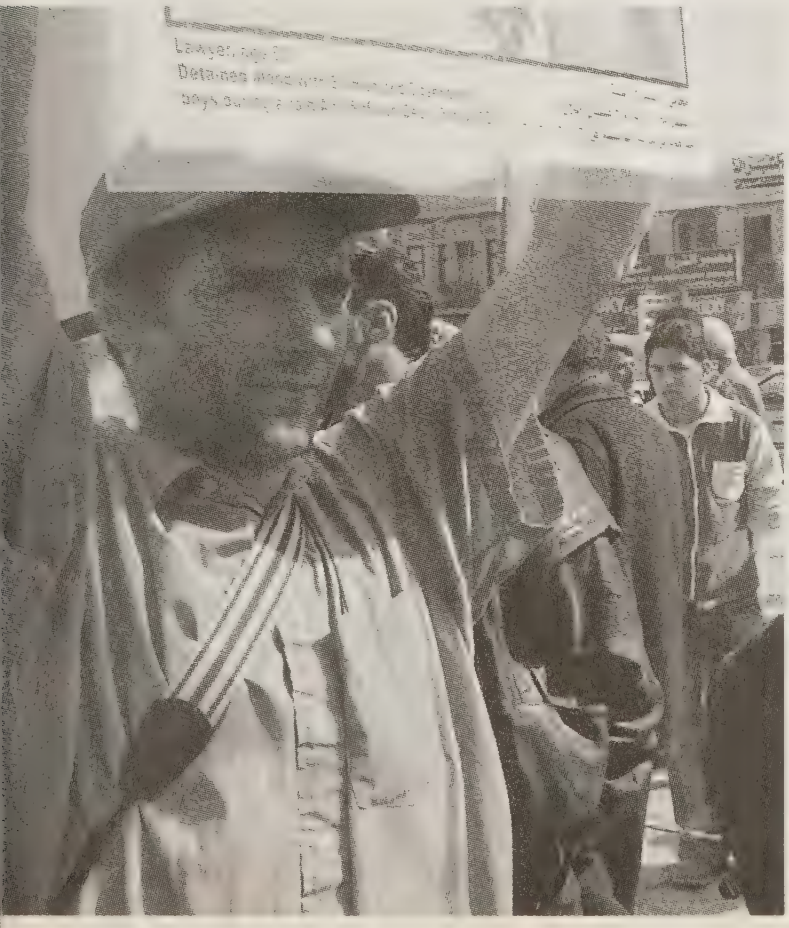
BY BARBARA GRISDALE

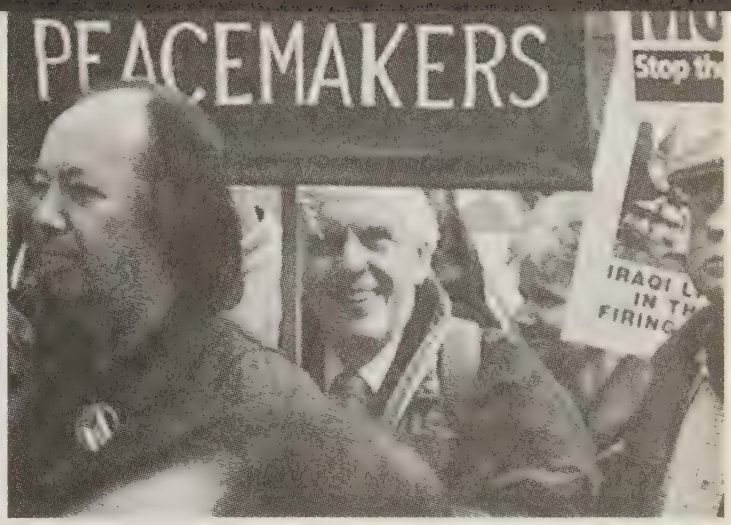
On Nov. 26, four members of Christian Peacemaker Teams were abducted in Iraq and held hostage by a group calling themselves Swords of Righteousness Brigade. The group claimed the hostages—Canadians Jim Loney of Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., and Harmeet Singh Sooden, formerly of Montreal, American Tom Fox and Briton Norman Kember—were spies and set a Dec. 11 deadline for them to be executed unless the U.S. and British governments released Iraqi prisoners. The deadline passed without news. As of press time, the hostages' fate was unknown.

This past Christmas we looked to Iraq, praying for a peaceful resolution of the situation of the four men being held hostage there.

They are among the myriad individuals and organizations putting themselves on the line because of their belief that peace must prevail. They are with the Christian Peacemaker Teams organization, which is committed to faith-based nonviolent alternatives and to enlisting the whole church in conscientious objection to war and the development of non-violent institutions.

PHOTOS: WWW.CPT.ORG





Top: Norman Kember at February 2003 Stop-the-War rally in London. Bottom: James Loney, before his abduction, in downtown Baghdad advocating for detainees.

Fearing just such a situation, Tom Fox tried to prepare himself when he was in Baghdad in 2004. He and the other member of CPT serving with him prepared a statement. It says, in part: "We reject the use of violent force to save our lives, should we be kidnapped, held hostage, or caught in the middle of a violent conflict situation. We also reject violence to punish anyone who harms us. We forgive those who consider us their enemies, therefore any penalty should be in the spirit of restorative justice rather than violent retribution."

It seems to me that a human face on the commitment to peace is what makes personal sacrifice possible.

The four hostages have seen at close range the faces of people caught in the grip of terror, torture, imprisonment and upheaval, have seen the devastation and suffering of the Iraqi people and have documented the stories of prisoners held at Abu Ghraib.

Questions of fear, personal safety, worthiness, ability and relevance face an individual considering following the path chosen by peacemakers. That person has the option of making a choice. To someone caught up in the horrors and terror of violence resulting from conflict or public policy, no option is available. It is the plight of these people that moves the peacemakers to overcome their fears and concerns in response. Each one must find for themselves the answer to whether they want to lay their life on the line.

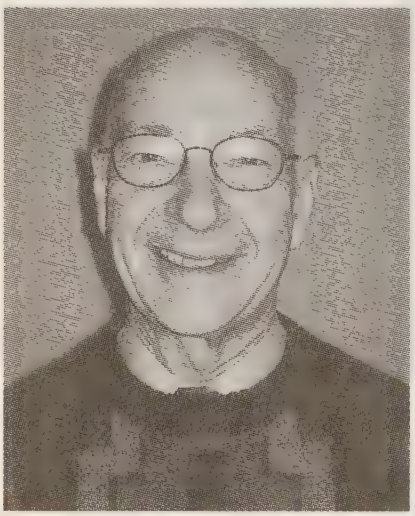
What does it mean to be a Christian and try to bring the peace of Christ to the world? I am not sure we can talk about bringing it to the world. If we each try to bring peace to those we meet, where ever we may be, perhaps that is the first step.

As we continue to think about peace, may our hearts and our prayers be with the peacemakers being held hostage and all peacemakers around the world and may the light of Christ guide them.

Barbara Grisdale is associated with Christian Peacemakers and is a member of Knox, Ottawa.

Lay candidates for moderator create a buzz

Barring a new candidate being presented at General Assembly in June (in St. Catharines, Ont.), the 2006 moderator will not be a minister, marking a first for the church (a diaconal minister held the office in 1996). Rev. Stephen Kendall, principal clerk, said the situation has created a buzz. "It's exciting to have a lay person as moderator," he said. "There is a lot of interest in the church for lay persons' issues." Kendall couldn't say if other names had been put forward that didn't make it onto the ballot, although this information will be released once the new moderator is chosen. If a name did not appear on the ballot, it is for one of two reasons: the nomination came from only one presbytery instead of the required two, or the individual declined to let his or her name stand. The nominees for 2006 are:



Leslie Young

• Elder, Westmount Church, Edmonton, Alta., where he is a 40-year member. He is a former moderator, Edmonton-Lakeland Presbytery, and has served on national committees including Live the Vision campaign, the 1996 think-tank Designing a New Mission for the Future of the PCC, and was on the advisory council to the Elder's Institute, St. Andrew's Hall.

• He is also a former 18-year member of the Alberta Legislative Assembly, and currently chairs Alberta Blue Cross; is a member of the board of Capital Health Authority and was former executive director of the Edmonton Space and Science Centre. This is the second consecutive year he has been nominated for moderator.

Young told the *Record* that "there is a challenge to ask people to slow down and think about the real meaning of life" amidst the busyness of today's society and the barrage of messages people receive each day. "The church must be the church," he said. "It obviously has a role as teacher, to affirm our faith and to help us interact with the Bible. It also has a responsibility of pastoral care to its own flock and to reach out in mission and extend that care to others.

Young believes strongly in mission and in fully engaging the laity in the church's work. "The church is Christ together with his people, and both clergy and laity need to focus their efforts together." Young is married, with two daughters and four grandchildren.



Wilma Welsh

• Elder, Knox, Guelph, Ont. Now retired, she has served the PCC for more than 42 years. At Knox, she taught church school, provided leadership for national youth events and camping ministries, and was one of the church's first female elders. She was a missionary to Taiwan between 1969 and 1975; and, is currently the mission coordinator at Knox, treasurer for the Women's Missionary Society and president of Waterloo-Wellington Presbyterial.

• She served the Board of Congregation Life as senior administrator until 1992, then became the administrator of International Ministries for the Life and Mission Agency.

Welsh's first nomination came 10 years ago—the first year lay people could appear on the ballot. "This is a rite of passage," she said. "The time is right to see a lay person in this position." She said the fact this year's nominees are laity is a nod not only to her work, but to all the support staff who devote their time to the church.

Her experience with mission work—through International Ministries, Presbyterian World Service & Development and Presbyterians Sharing—will influence her focus if she is chosen as moderator. "My interest is in international ministries," she said. "I've had the privilege of visiting many of our partner churches overseas and to get to know them. It's been a real blessing."

Welsh is particularly aware of the contribution retirees make to the church. She said recognizing and supporting this work—and even remembering that retirees can contribute at all—is a challenge facing the church today. She is also a strong supporter of the WMS and would like to see their role highlighted. "I believe they have kept mission alive in the church. These women are constantly making congregations aware of the mission of the church overseas and at home."

"I'm sort of overwhelmed by all of this," she continued. "When you're retired, you don't think of them thinking of you. But I think retirees still have a lot of energy and lots of love to contribute." – *AM*



Montreal helps Saskatoon

REV. STEWART FOLSTER, of the Saskatoon Native Circle Ministry, has the keys to the latest member of his ministry family: a slightly used, 15-passenger Dodge Ram van. Folster, with help from his wife Terry, has led the mission since 1992. In 2000, a relationship was formalized with St. Andrew and St. Paul, Montreal. The outreach interest group supporting the twinning within the Montreal church has named itself A&P Neechewagon, a Cree word meaning friends. A&P Neechewagon raised $15,000 (which included an important contribution from the Presbytery of Montreal), and was matched by a grant from the Cooke's Fund of the Presbytery of East Toronto, to purchase the van that will enable Folster to multiply his outreach. – *Keith Randall, Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul, Montreal*

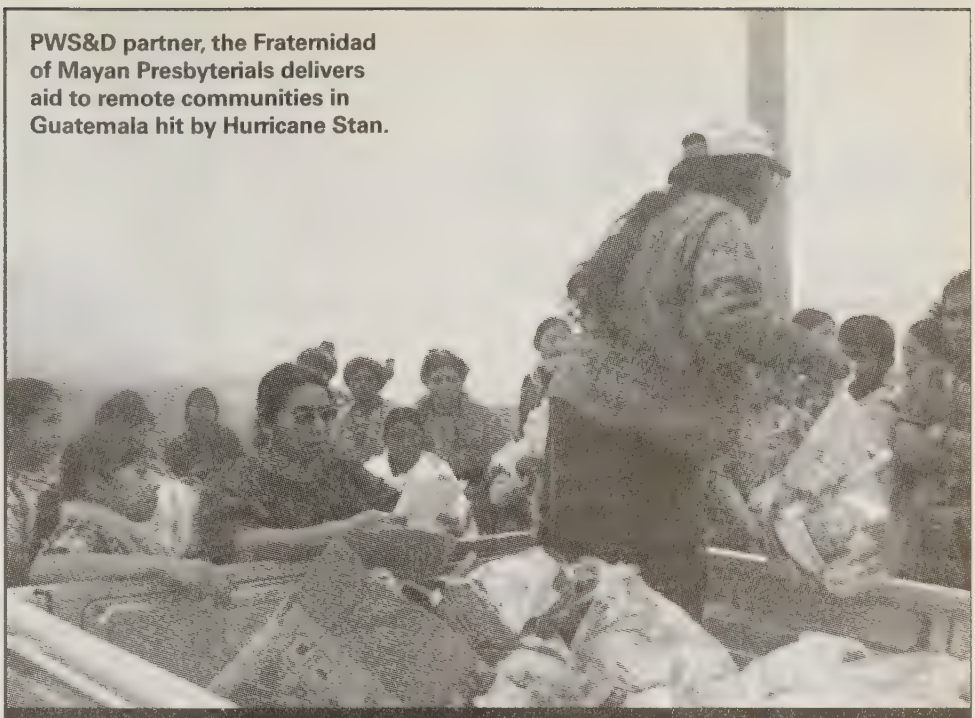


Update on Sheila

THE *RECORD* told the story of Sheila Conkey last April. In the aftermath of her mother's death Sheila still lives in the family home, though under very different circumstances. Her father, Frank, moved into a retirement home, donating the family house to Community Living. Sheila shares her home with Joan and Mario, helps with meals and is out daily, shopping, bowling, swimming or working. She attends St. Timothy's, Ajax, Ont., where she continues to share her faith.

- L. June Stevenson

PWS&D partner, the Fraternidad of Mayan Presbyterials delivers aid to remote communities in Guatemala hit by Hurricane Stan.



FRATERNIDAD OF MAYAN PRESBYTERIALS

Not Forgotten

Continuous rains caused by Hurricane Stan in October 2005 devastated many communities in Central America. Huge landslides and overflowing rivers swept away homes, crops, trees, animals, and water and irrigation systems. The damage to agriculture was particularly extensive, at a time when crops were just ready to harvest.

PWS&D partners in Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua are working to provide food, water, sanitation, and housing for those affected. PWS&D is working with the Canadian Foodgrains Bank to provide essential food to help communities survive until crops can be harvested once again. Your gifts to PWS&D help partners get aid to communities that might otherwise be forgotten.

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Churches must work together

Leader of African council seeks an ecumenical effort

Africa's greatest challenge is not the widespread poverty keeping the continent from moving forward, the HIV/AIDS pandemic that is decimating its population, or the civil wars that funnel resources away from real solutions. It is, says Bishop Mvume Dandala, general secretary of the All Africa Council of Churches, inspiring Africa's churches and their Western partners to work together to eradicate these problems.

"Let us share the task of advocacy more and more," Dandala told the *Record*. "Not just speaking to the people of Africa but to the people of the world, strengthening our relationship together. Churches are agents of transformation and service but unless there is a collective commitment to deal with the issues of the world, our witness will continue to fall short."

Dandala was in Canada in the fall to thank his Canadian church partners for "walking with Africa" through its challenges. He said now that Africa has entered a new era in its history—one where liberation from colonial empires is complete—the council and churches must "rethink their mission, and the ecumenical movement has to think about how it will accompany churches."

Dandala, who is in his third of a five-year term at the council, said strengthening the ecumenical movement is critical in effectively responding to the problems in Africa. "The splintering of the church is a great concern. It undermines the work of the church and is disempowering," he said. "Ecumenism is not about stopping people from being the denominational church families they are now, but about working together and toward common goals and strengthening one another along the way."

'Churches are agents of transformation and service but unless there is a collective commitment to deal with the issues of the world, our witness will continue to fall short'

Despite disagreements between and within denominations, the church must learn how to speak with the same voice—although Dandala said it is not the intention of the council to get churches to see things in the same way. Instead, he said the council's task is to make the churches work together while disagreeing and encourage church leaders to keep the priorities for the continent in place.



Bishop Dandala

Such priorities focus on social, economic and political endeavours (poverty, HIV/AIDS, installing and supporting good governance): "the things that are needed to transform Africa.

It is unfortunate, he said, that African churches often get sidetracked from what is really needed; allowing partners in the West to influence what they work towards. The same-sex marriage and gay ordination debate is just one example. The Anglican Church especially has suffered from heated debate and divisions over same-sex issues, particularly in Nigeria, where the church's senior archbishop recently announced threatened to separate from the Church of England if its clergy are permitted to bless same-sex relationships. Although Dandala said he understands the concerns of the church regarding such issues, focusing all energy on them only hurts efforts to aid Africa in its struggles. He said the main priorities of Africa "far outweigh the issue of same-sex."

On average, churches provide 40 to 50 per cent of all health-care structures in Africa. In some countries, said Dandala, if the churches stopped providing such services, the health-care system would collapse. However, many of these groups don't know what their partners are doing. "There has to be more of a cooperative rather than competitive spirit that has characterized the life of the church in Africa," he said.

Dandala said Western churches have a good track record of relief work, but more focus should be put on helping to change things in the long-term. "Our challenge is to think more and more about the ways that are going to empower the people of Africa to take their future into their own hands and to be more proactive in seeking to defeat poverty and illiteracy.

As long as there are ecumenists, let's bring them together and let's keep trying." – *AM*

Armageddon uncovered

Israeli archaeologists have uncovered what they believe could be the oldest church ever found in the Holy Land—a discovery experts say may shed new light on early Christianity. However, some scholars are calling it a publicity stunt.

"It's a myth," said Franciscan priest and archaeologist Michel Piccirillo, as reported in the *Toronto Star*. "It seems to be more propaganda and advertisement for tourists than anything else." Piccirillo said there is no doubt the November discovery at Megiddo—the traditional site of Armageddon described in the Book of Revelation—ranks as an early Christian church, quite possibly from the fourth century. But based on what has been shown, there is little to distinguish it from more than 260 other churches of the Byzantine era in Israel.

Such debates over authenticity are commonplace in archaeology—especially in Israel, where much of the world's leading archaeological community resides. The fiasco surrounding the James ossuary—a burial box presented to the media in 2002 and said to have once held the body of Jesus' brother James—was highly publicized and even showcased at Toronto's Royal Ontario Museum in 2003. It was later said to have a forged inscription. The antiquities collector who unveiled the discovery, Oded Golan, was accused of embellishing ancient relics. Israeli authorities are trying to put him behind bars. Golan and his co-accused maintain their innocence.

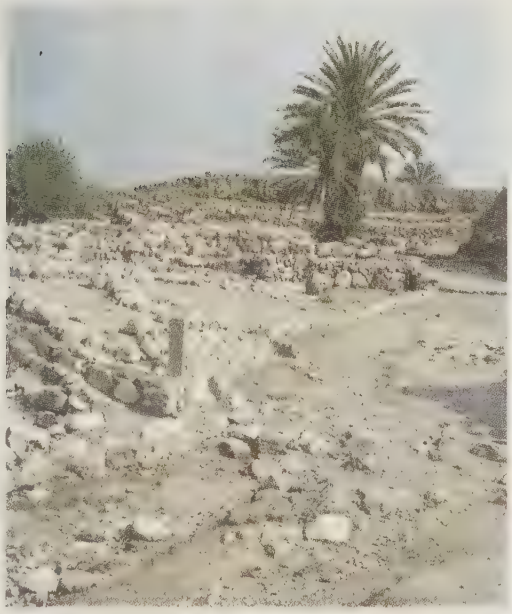


PHOTO: AMY MACLACHLAN

Ruins of the ancient fortress at Megiddo can still be seen in Israel. The site of numeorous battles, the area is believed to be where the Armageddon will take place. It is also where ruins of an ancient church were found last November.

Michael Gregg, a doctoral candidate in anthropology at the University of Toronto, has been on several archaeological digs in the Middle East. In an interview with the *Record*, Gregg said, "You need to be critical. The James ossuary is a pretty good example of that. It's a lesson we need to learn from—especially when dealing with biblical myths."

He said archaeologists have to record their biases and prejudices before beginning an excavation in order to increase credibility and announce any preconceived notions that could influence interpretation.

"What is your ethnic agenda? Your gender agenda? What perceptions are there? You're interpreting the archaeological record, so anyone in the future has to know where you're coming from."

He said the language in Israel's archaeological world currently revolves around trying to identify Israeli identity in early historical contexts. "Whether the evidence bears that out remains to be seen."

As for the most recent discovery at Megiddo, many have already sung its praises. "It's an historic discovery that serves as confirmation to Christians all over the world," Archbishop Pietro Sambi, the Vatican's envoy to the Holy Land, told Israeli television.

Others are more skeptical, as noted in the *Star*. "The dating will be crucial," said Yisca Harani, an independent Israeli scholar specializing in early Christian antiquity. "We have to wait for the full picture and only then can we throw around these big statements." – *AM with files from ENI*

Scots urge solidarity with Palestinians

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND has urged Christians to fight Israel's internationally-condemned West Bank barrier by flooding into Bethlehem to strengthen the local Palestinian population.

Rev. David Lacy said Christians should see the "oppressive" concrete wall near Bethlehem for themselves so they can better understand the suffering of the local Palestinian population.

Lacy explained he felt sympathy for the Israeli people who have suffered attacks by Palestinian bombers infiltrating into Israel from the West Bank, but he did not believe the location of the barrier was aimed at providing Israelis with security.

"It must be very difficult for Israeli citizens to live with the constant threat of suicide bombers," said Lacy. "I've been told the statistics show that the number of bombers have been reduced by 90 per cent ... but I also saw that the wall is in Palestinian territory where it does not separate Palestinians from Israelis but rather it separates Palestinians from Palestinians."

'None of the people I met are terrorists and their lives have been badly effected by the occupation'

Israel has built about half of the 720-kilometre barrier. It is mostly barbed-wire fences but includes sections of concrete wall. Israel's Supreme Court has ruled the government must re-route large tracts of the barrier closer to the West Bank-Israel frontier to minimize the harm to local Palestinians.

"We should also now focus on Palestinians. It's pretty easy for them to be condemned as terrorists but none of the people I met [during the trip] are terrorists and their lives have been badly effected by the occupation," he said.

– *Michele Green, ENI*

Meat aids Foodgrains

In a unique fundraiser, started by a group of farmers in Southern Manitoba, the sale of ground beef made from donated cows will have a double benefit. Youth groups, church groups, and community clubs will sell ground beef instead of chocolates this year. From each $20-box they will recieve five dollars for their own fundraising campaign. The remainder, after processing costs will be donated to Canadian Foodgrains Bank, an organization which collects donations of cash, grain and other agricultural commodities for distribution to the world's hungry.

For more information: 204-347-5351, www.foodgrainsbank.ca.

Jews most targetted

(ENI) — Jews remained by far the greatest target of religious-based hate crimes in the United States in 2004, according to a recently-released report by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The FBI recorded 1,374 incidents of religion-oriented hate crimes in 2004, and 954 of those were directed at Jews.

"This report always serves as a wake-up call that hate crime remains a national problem in America," said Barbara B. Balser, national chairperson of the Anti-Defamation League, a group which says it aims to stop the defamation of Jewish people, and to secure justice and fair treatment to all citizens alike.

Church-state debate

(ENI) — Since the Lutheran-led reformation in 1537, Norway's dominant church — the (Lutheran) Church of Norway — has had the reigning king as its formal head.

In 2002, a Church of Norway commission made a recommendation along the same lines as that of the Lutheran Church of Sweden which has loosened its state ties.

"The debate on state-church relations may prove to be the most demanding and extensive one [in the coming years]," Trond Giske, the Norwegian minister for culture and church affairs, told the Church of Norway general synod in Lillehammer in November.

Representing Norway's new left-centre government, Giske told the 85-member general synod that the church-state report would take all views into account.

The Church of Norway counts around 88 per cent of the country's 4.5 million inhabitants as members.

Denouncing hereticism

(ENI)—Prominent religious leaders in Indonesia are urging Muslims not to join extremist forces believed responsible for a series of well-publicized suicide bombings in the country.

Such acts, the leaders say, are "too random" and are based on heretical teachings and interpretations of Islamic theology.

"We will disseminate true Islamic teachings on jihad to our members," Din Syamsuddin president of Muhammadiyah, an Islamic organization, said in announcing the campaign. The initiative joins several groups with Indonesian government efforts to prevent a repeat of acts of violence, such as the November 2002 bombings in Bali, Indonesia which caused 202 deaths.

The exact meaning of jihad is debated and contested — a commonly agreed definition is struggle. Some, however, argue the word has a meaning more suggestive of justice or duty.

"We must control the false interpretations of jihad," said Syamsuddin, who was reported to have called for the withdrawal of books written by convicted terrorists in Indonesia for fear they could inspire further terrorism.

Remembering Nagasaki

(ENI) — A Roman Catholic church and school that were bombed in Nagasaki in 1945 have staged a new Japanese classical Noh drama called *The Holy Mother of Nagasaki.*

The Noh drama featured Mary incarnated as a female believer and bomb survivor who recounts how she helped and comforted those hurt by the atomic bombing on August 9, 1945 of what was one of Japan's most Christian cities.

It was staged in November to mark the 60th anniversary of a memorial mass for those killed by the atomic bombing, held in the suburb of Urakami near the site of the church that was the biggest Christian place of worship in Japan and which was reduced to rubble. An estimated 10,000 Catholics from the city, once visited by St. Francis Xavier, died in the bombing.

Blasphemy in Pakistan

(ENI) — "As long as the blasphemy law remains in force, we will continue to suffer," said Victor Azariah, general secretary of the National Council of Churches of Pakistan.

Azariah was speaking on the 40th day following an attack by what witnesses said was a hundred-strong mob against Christians in the village of Sangla Hill, 100 kilometres from Lahore, after a Christian had been accused of blasphemy. The crowd arrived in buses and torched Catholic, Presbyterian and Salvation Army places of worship as well as a Roman Catholic convent, a school and an orphanage.

Christians, who account for about 3 million of Pakistan's population of 162 million, have repeatedly protested about the blasphemy law, which punishes insults against the prophet Mohammed with a death sentence or life imprisonment.

Several Christians have been sentenced to death although the verdicts were later overturned in higher courts. But in more than half a dozen cases Christians charged with blasphemy were killed before the start of their trial or after they had been acquitted.

Peter Jacob, executive secretary of the Justice and Peace Commission of the Roman Catholic Church in Pakistan said that though the government has started rebuilding the churches destroyed by the mob, "Sangla is still simmering."

More than 3,000 Muslims gathered in the troubled town in early December demanding the unconditional release of 88 Muslims arrested for the attack on Christian targets. Muslim clerics have also called for public hanging of the Christian charged with blasphemy.

Joseph Francis, a Christian activist, said many Christian families who had fled the violence and since returned were still "living in fear."

The end is nigh, or not

Wherein the columnist equates his mortality to the apocalypse

BY ANDREW FAIZ

I have already lived more than half the years I am expected to live according to trusted statistics about the average lifespan of males in Canada. And, as I celebrate yet another birth anniversary this month and the anniversary of my father's death, my thoughts turn, naturally, to the imminent apocalypse. Here, in no particular order, are sure signs the end is nigh:

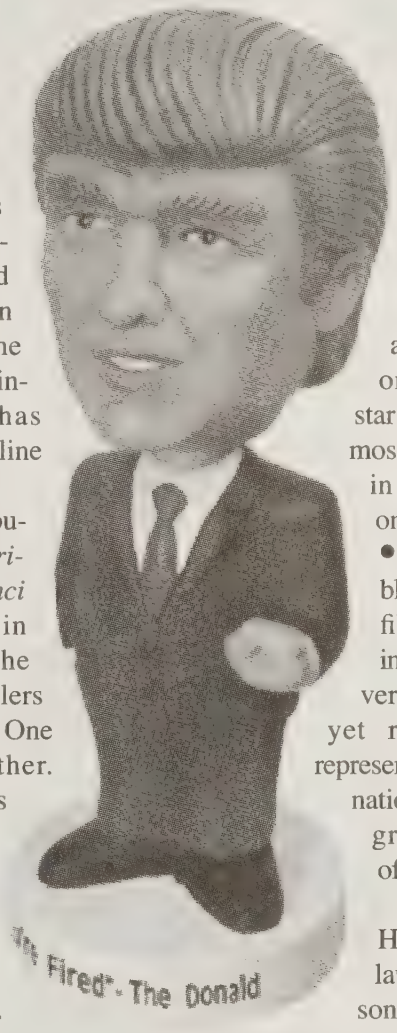
• Paris Hilton. This is Paris's world, we just live in it. She is the perfect icon of our age: begotten of wealth, she is famous for being famous. Without the benefit of any obvious skill she is a star on television, the internet and magazine and tabloid covers. She has parlayed all this—and much more—from one singular, post-post-modern talent: She has no shame.

• Jen and Brad, Brangelina, Bennifer I, Bennifer II, TomKat and so on. You who have never entered into a conversation about these or other tabloid couplings raise your hand. Unhnh, are you sure? Not even once? Well, you're a better person than the rest of us.

• H5N1; HIV; Ebola; SARS; West Nile; Dengue; Lassa Fever; Norovirus; Norwalk; Polio; SRSV; influenza; etc. You know it's coming. In 1918 more than 20 million people died of the flu worldwide. Currently more than 40 million have AIDS in Africa alone. The estimated death toll for the next decade from this one illness is in the tens of millions; mostly in Africa. Medical professionals no longer say "if" in reference to the next pandemic, but "when."

• Wars and other man-made atrocities. According to Zbigniew Brzezinski, former advisor to presidents John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson and Jimmy Carter, up to 175 million lives were "extinguished by politically motivated carnage" from 1900 to 1993, worldwide. This includes Communist oppression, the two world wars and both civilian and military dead. In the decade-plus since Brzezinski's estimate there has been no discernable decline in this form of politics.

• The simultaneous popularity of *The Purpose Driven Life* and *The Da Vinci Code*. Both have sold in eight figures and are the two uncontested bestsellers of the new millennium. One does not cancel the other. Both strike me as signs of spiritual anxiousness. One questions the true motivations of the church and the other provides personally motivated salvation. In either case I don't see an active, relevant church in the future.



• *The Apprentice*. A dictatorial millionaire recently released from jail for insider trading and a dictatorial, self-aggrandizing billionaire weekly embarrass, then fire, little nobodies who want to be just like them. I can hear the fabric of the universe ripping each time they utter "You're Fired!"

• The Chicago White Sox won the World Series. The year after the other Sox won. Both the Bambino curse and the Black Sox curse are now lifted. Or maybe there never was a curse; maybe it was just coincidental. I'm old school on this: if the Maple Leafs win the Cup I'm taking the first ship off this planet.

• Oscars night. It is bloated, self-important and always at least an hour longer than necessary. It shines a very, very bright light on the most brightly lit star in the zeitgeist. It is the most important award show in the world. And I want one.

• The Olympics. They're bloated, self-important and filled with market driven, inane events. They shine a very, very bright light and yet reveal nothing. They represent the worst hypocrisy—national pride and corporate greed—under the guise of athleticism.

That said, God *is* in His heavens, children laugh and sing for no reason, love does conquer all, making the blandest meal taste gourmet, red wine is a spiritual experience, friends do make the quality of life and *The Third Man* will always be a great movie.

(Of course Angelina is hot and so is Brad, so, I'm just saying, it seems right. Of course it was adultery. But they're so hot. Yet, their movie wasn't. Oh well.

Did I mention that children still sing and laugh for no discernable reason and God is in His heavens?)

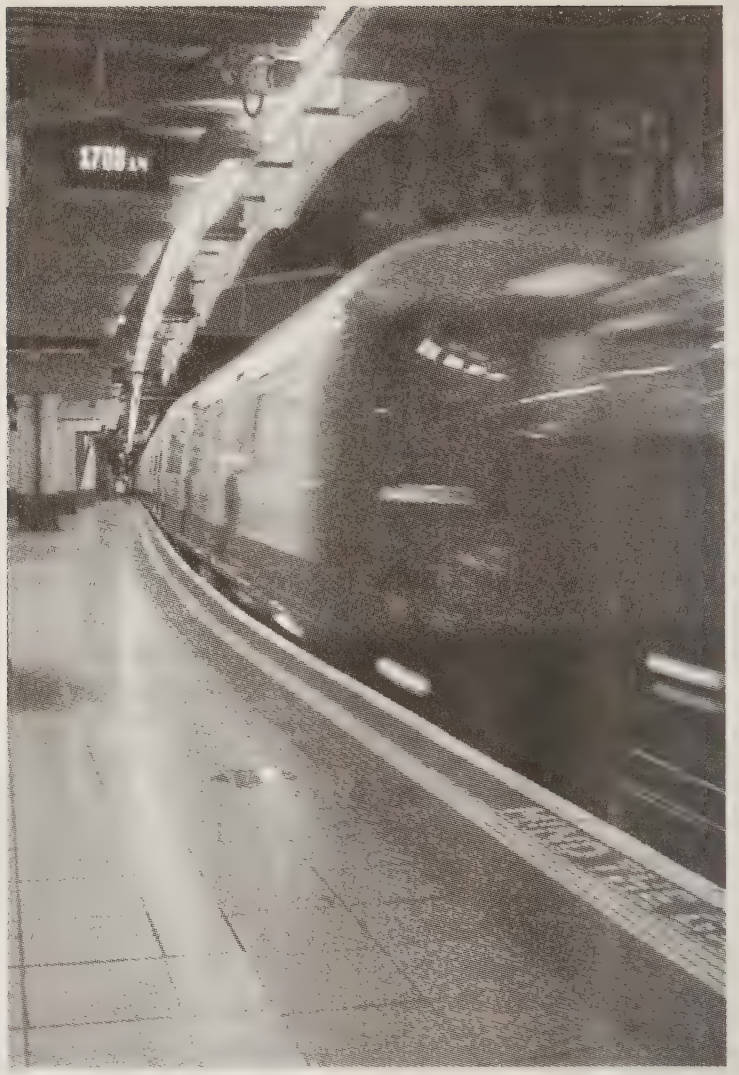
Andrew Faiz is a writer, producer and filmmaker. He is also managing editor of the *Record*. You can reach him at mngeditor@presbyterianrecord.ca.

LETTER FROM AWAY

Observing silence

Frenzies bewilder, reveries perturb the mind

BY STEWART GILLAN



WHAT IS IT TO OBSERVE A MOMENT of silence? After a bomb blast, at the funeral of a murdered school boy, or on a march calling for an end to poverty, to cite three examples. Again, how do we respond when we are told that our silence in the face of the suffering of others makes us complicit in the prolongation of their suffering? So many silences of late. Observed and ignored, celebrated and suspect. What are we learning?

It was in Ballycastle that my wife Sarah and I first heard the news that bombs had gone off in London earlier that morning, on July 7. We had spent the night in a farmhouse and gone on to visit the Corrymeela Community after breakfast. We heard the news on the radio on our way into the town. We found a pub that had just opened and watched the coverage, feeling that same mixture of shock and horror, outrage and compassion that I'm sure you did as the news reached you. All of a sudden we felt farther away than the road and the ferry had taken us. It was good to have the Corrymeela folk to go back to for lunch, where we observed a moment of silence, the first of many, in memory of the victims.

When, a week after the bombings, on July14, the nation observed a two-minute silence in memory of the victims, Sarah and I found ourselves in County Galway, on the way to Thoor Ballylee, the medieval tower that was W.B. Yeats' summer home and muse for much of the 1920s. As noon approached we climbed the winding stone steps to the top of the tower, where we observed the silence.

A curious turn of phrase: to observe silence. What does one see? Treetops blown about in a graceful, almost hypnotic dance. Dark water streaming by below. A man and a child, the child sitting on the stonewall of the bridge over the River Cloon, the man taking a photograph. Up above, the stones of the parapet like broken teeth, edging up and down around us.

From his time in Thoor Ballylee comes some of Yeats' most powerful poetry. The Tower (1928), to cite an obvious example, where in Part VII is an eerie reminder of the silence we observed on July 14:

I climb to the tower-top and lean upon broken stone,
A mist that is like blown snow is sweeping over all,
Valley, river, and elms, under the light of a moon
That seems unlike itself, that seems unchangeable,
A glittering sword out of the east. A puff of wind
And those white glimmering fragments of the mist
sweep by.
Frenzies bewilder, reveries perturb the mind;
Monstrous familiar images swim to the mind's eye.

By the end of July it had become difficult to remember how the month had begun. On July 2, on the eve of the G8 summit, over 225,000 people marched in the streets of Edinburgh, calling for an end to poverty, for more and wiser aid, fair trade and the cancellation of odious debt. While the need to withhold financial assistance from corrupt rulers was acknowledged, and the need to contain those who sought forcibly to hijack the day with violence was successfully met, it was the "click message," telling us that every three seconds a child dies from extreme poverty, that focused the hearts and minds of the marchers. It was a call to give such children a chance to live. A call that could be heard as much in the silences between the clicks, as one

I thought of Paul's call to rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep. Do we have the capacity to do both, and be true to both, at the same time?

waited for the next snap of a finger, signalling yet another death, as in the clicks themselves.

Those of us marching with the Linlithgow banner were on the George IV Bridge when, at 3 p.m., the march stopped and fell silent. Completely silent. For sixty seconds. I remember being surprised by that silence. By its purity in the heart of the city. A Make Poverty History flag was flying from a flagpole on top of one of the buildings in front of us. Then I began to hear a sound, like rushing water, coming towards us. A crescendo of cheering voices in a wave rolling over us as the silence was broken along the march. It was exhilarating. And yet, what were we celebrating? Ourselves? That we had done it? Got ourselves and our voices out? For Gleneagles to see and hear? We marched on. It was not until we had crossed the High Street and were heading down the Mound that I thought again of the silence between the clicks. The silence of the newly dead, audible only when listened for.

And then, on a late August afternoon in the Main Theatre at the Edinburgh Book Festival, I was accused, together with the rest of the world, of silence, a complicit silence, in the face of the genocide in Rwanda in April 1994. Our accuser was General Romeo Dallaire, force commander of the UN mission to Rwanda, who, fighting his own inner demons, had managed at length and heroically to produce the devastating indictment that is *Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda.*

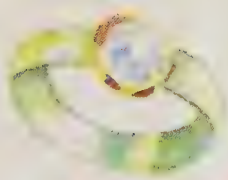
As I listened to Dallaire I was struck by the sharp contrast between the death story in Rwanda and the birth story in South Africa in the same month in 1994. The silence regarding Rwanda, I realized, was made far easier for millions of people around the world by South Africa, which went to the polls after decades of struggle against apartheid in the historic election that brought Nelson Mandela to the office of State President. It was hard to hear the outcry of the victims in Rwanda when our ears were filled, and gladly, with the birth cry of a new South Africa.

I had not, before that August afternoon, held the birth cry and the death cry in the same moment. Felt the joy and been accused of the silence at the same time. I thought of Paul's call to rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep. (Romans 12:15) Do we have the capacity to do both, and be true to both, at the same time? A question for our relationships here at home, as well as abroad.

Rev. Dr. D. Stewart Gillan is minister of St. Michael's, Linlithgow, West Lothian, Scotland. He is a proud son of Cape Breton.




BIBLE



Planning for marriage, not just a wedding

by Amy MacLachlan

illustrations by Eleanor Dowson

The average Canadian wedding costs about $20,000 and the American wedding industry pulls in about $72 billion each year. When stressed-out brides are frantically planning for the dress, the flowers, the cake and photographer, who is planning for the marriage?

"It's so much about the fairy tale," says Rev. Wes Denyer, minister at St. Andrew's, Brampton, Ont. "There's so much effort put into making it a fairy tale day, and so little time and money put towards making it a healthy, strong relationship that will withstand the years."

As couples become more driven and stressed-out, and society puts more demands on a family's time, taking steps to ensure a lasting, healthy, fulfilling marriage and a stable, happy family are imperative. This month, the month of love and romance perpetuated by Valentines' Day, the *Record* offers a marriage planner.

STEP ONE: THE PERFECT SOULMATE

You can meet your soulmate at Bible studies, church picnics and fellowship hour, if you're lucky. You can meet her at work, through a friend, on a mountain top while hiking or in a ravine while canoeing. And, you can meet him online.

Sojourners magazine reports that 17.2 million people viewed online personal ads in 2004, and an article in *Maclean's* reports that the North American dating industry cashes in at a whopping $1.2 billion a year—although this also includes traditional match-making agencies and companies that facilitate introductions through things like speed-dating, dinner and lunch parties and singles vacations.

Dating sites—like Lavalife, the No. 1 dating site in Canada with $100 million in annual revenue—exist for the general population, and many others for specialty markets, including Jews, Christians, gays and lesbians. There is even a site based in South Africa linking people who are HIV-positive.

Sam Moorcroft, creator and president of ChristianCafe.com, said that as more and more people try internet dating and tell others of the normal people they meet there, stigmas surrounding this method continue to disappear. He said online dating is great for just about anyone—whether you live in a small town with few available singles, or a big city and have no idea how to narrow the field, the specific profiles on dating sites can help in the search.

"We're increasingly connected because of technology, but we're also more disconnected," he said. "I'm living proof that it works." Moorcroft met his wife Pollyanna online. They are now the parents of twins.

STEP TWO: THE PERFECT BEGINNING

While cohabitation rates have shot up in the past decade or so, marriage rates have dropped substantially. In Canada, the marriage rate peaked at 10.6 per 1,000 population in 1941, but dropped to 5.0 in 2001, according to Statistics Canada.



By contrast, in 2001, 16 per cent of all Canadian couples were cohabiting. Quebec has Canada's highest common-law rate, at 30 per cent. (Quebec also has the country's highest divorce rate at 50 per cent.)

Despite popular opinion, living together before marriage is not a great test run before tying the knot. Anne-Marie Ambert, a sociology professor at York University and researcher at the Vanier Institute of the Family, recently published a report stating that couples who live together have lower expectations of sexual fidelity, are less supportive of each other, have a lesser ability to problem solve, are less religious and have a higher approval of divorce. She told the *Record* these attitudes increase the likelihood of divorce, and these findings are the same the world-over. According to her research, more than half of cohabitational unions dissolve within five years.

Denyer estimates about 90 per cent of the couples he marries are already living together—something he admits doesn't always bode well for the long-term. "If you're living together, it becomes problematic to call off the relationship, so you drift towards marriage. If you're already sharing things and everyone expects you to get married and you've created dependencies, it's hard to walk away from.

"Love is wonderful," says Denyer, "but you need to take a good look at the relationship and analyze it in the cold, hard light of day. Too often, it seems like people are thinking, 'we've been going out for so long, this is just the next step.'"

Barna Research (based in the United States), found that 25 per cent of born-again Christians and 37 per cent of Christians not classified as born-again lived together before getting married.

STEP THREE: THE PERFECT RELATIONSHIP

Denyer said he probably marries an average of 20 couples each year. He does not offer marital counselling, but strongly recommends they take a pre-marital course and have a couple of sessions with a marriage counsellor. "There is a great deal of interest when I mention this," he said, "but then many of them don't do it—which is really stupid. They'll spend a zillion dollars on the wedding, but they won't spend the time and money on getting to know each other."

Elizabeth Huss, a member of the Ontario Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, and author of *Love that Lasts: Personal Stories of Lasting Marriage,* believes marriage can last a lifetime. In her book, she reveals her "secret ingredients" to make marriage work. Love, communication, intimacy, sex, passion, resolution of conflict, equality, shared values and humour are all imperative. "[Marriage] pulls and pushes you to grow as a person and as a couple," writes Huss. "Marriage is for the brave, for people willing to risk the intensity and hard work of making a life together."

With such noble requirements, it isn't any wonder that couples are searching for help along the way. The Presbyterian Church does not offer its own pre-marital course. "The national church was involved in marriage enrichment programs in the '70s and '80s," said Rev. John Henderson, minister at St. Andrew's, Newmarket, Ont., and a licensed marriage and family therapist, "but now it's right off the map."

However, many ministers have either developed their own preparatory programs, or recommend an existing course. "I've made mine along the way," said Henderson. "I've pulled ideas from everywhere!"

Henderson said there are three main areas that should be covered: attitude, behaviour and communication. He said if good communication is learned, couples are more likely to seek help if they run into difficulties later. "The process of talking and sharing are one of the most important things that happen. Teaching people to communicate on these issues is the long-lasting thing. It's more important than the content."

"Given the culture around the wedding day and the idea in society of the supremacy of romantic love, pre-marital counselling can help people step out of that ethos of our culture and begin to discuss with one another the things that are critical," said Denyer.

STEP FOUR: THE PERFECT CEREMONY

In *The Alternative Wedding Book*, Mark and Eileen Summit list questions for a couple to consider when planning a ceremony that reflects their values:

- What religious or spiritual symbolism conveys our belief about marriage and our joining together as a couple?
- What beliefs, ideas or philosophy do we share?
- What traditions are part of our family histories?
- How can we best and most fully celebrate this spirit-filled decision?
- Are there friends, support groups or faith communities we want to include?





Many devout couples are opting to highlight their faith in the ceremony—foregoing romantic notions of love for God-focused vows and incorporating what's truly important to them as a couple. In *The Bride's Handbook: A Spiritual and Practical Guide for Planning your Wedding*, author Amy J. Tol advises couples to celebrate God's love for them and acknowledge His hand in their relationship.

Tol writes that vows should reflect commitment, loyalty, fidelity, respect and honour, a promise to fulfill marital roles and acknowledging they need God to accomplish these things.

Some wedding ideas that highlight the importance of faith, family and friends include:

- Instead of tossing the bouquet to singles, give it to the couple who has been married the longest
- Have a talented friend or family member write and perform an original song
- Invite a congregation member to make a banner or quilt for the ceremony
- Show your concern for the environment by making your own invitations from recycled paper and enlisting the talents of an artistic friend to decorate them
- Ask guests to make a charitable donation in your name instead of giving gifts
- Use potted plants to decorate the church or reception location—they last longer than flowers and can be donated to a hospital or nursing home after the event

STEP FIVE: THE PERFECT MARRIAGE

Christian marriages (particularly between evangelical Christians) have the same incidence of divorce of secular couples. According to 2001 figures from Barna Research, 33 per cent of married born-again individuals have gone through a divorce, which is nearly identical to the 34 per cent incidence among American non-born again adults.

Conservative Christian marriages that often focus on traditional roles for man and wife may run into conflicts. In such situations, Denyer said there is the possibility of the relationship becoming about power. "To think the relationship will get better because one has dominated the other person seems like a fallacy to me. Marriage is about intimacy and vulnerability and having a deeper relationship with each other. It's about talking and truly listening to one another."

Because about 38 per cent of marriages are expected to end in divorce by the 30th wedding anniversary, according to Statistics Canada, John Henderson believes that post-marital check-ups are an excellent resource for couples. The major shift that occurs after marriage is enough to shake up even strong relationships, and post-marital enrichment can help iron out any problems.

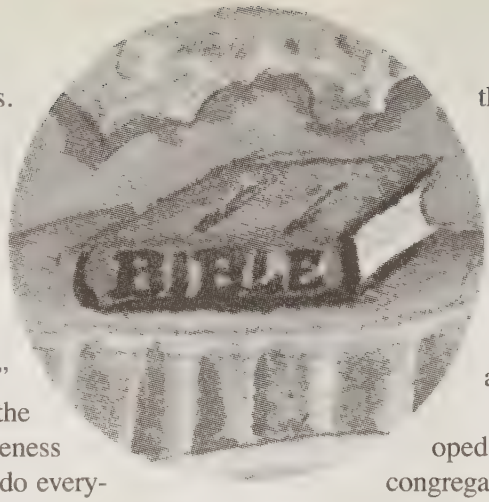
Couples generally seek counselling when there is already a problem that needs to be resolved, while marriage enrichment is used as a preventative measure to teach skills and to enhance the quality of the relationship. The church can play an in-

Resources for families and parents from the national church

- STEP (Systematic Training for Effective Parenting): Can be presented in a workshop format over several weeks. It comes in a series of videos which can be rented from the library at church offices
- Family Table Talk: Things for parents to talk to their children about during meals
- Advent devotional for families
- Family resource table: Monthly resources for congregations to enrich family life
- Learning Together: An intergenerational Sunday school program
- Spirituality retreats for children and their parents or grandparents
- Weekends Away: Intergenerational church retreats
- The Family with Memory project: Ways that families can playfully memorize the great truths of the Christian faith
- Dorothy Henderson, associate secretary for Christian Education and Ministry with Children, Youth and Families, is available to varying degrees to help congregations conduct workshops and seminars.
- Visit the church's website at www.presbyterian.ca and click on Christian Education for more information.

tegral role in this enrichment process.

The Presbyterian Church's resources focus on parenting and overall family life. Dorothy Henderson, associate secretary for Christian education and ministry with children, youth and families, is also trained as a marriage enrichment facilitator. She recognizes the importance of supporting couples "at any stage and age" but sees the difficulties in this. "One of the things we must wrestle with is the awareness that, as a small denomination, we cannot do everything, so we simply focus on some things and try very hard to do them well."



She realizes that when clergy are left on their own to find resources that will help couples, it may be easier to simply do nothing. She did say, however, that she would be happy to create some resources that pertain to married couples, and insert them in the May edition of the PCPak (the mailing sent out to congregations from the national church) and post them on the church's website.

Denyer said he would like to see training in marital counselling at the church's colleges, where the topic is virtually absent. He said while the colleges rely on internships to teach such things, this often becomes a case of "the blind leading the blind." He also wondered if the annual courses offered to ministers as continuing education couldn't be used to train clergy in pre-marital counselling and enrichment.



The United Church of Canada has developed several resources on marriage for clergy, congregations and individuals. *Passion and Freedom* is a marriage preparation and enrichment resource, and is available in a leader's edition and a couples' edition.

According to Jackie Harper, who works with family and seniors' ministries at the United Church, *Passion and Freedom* is intended to provide worship leaders with resources to support couples through all the stages of their relationship: marriage preparation, marriage enrichment and loss and grief after death or divorce.

The church also publishes a family ministry kit containing a photocopy-ready resource entitled *Marriage Matters*. It is affiliated with United in Marriage—a weekend workshop intended to deepen and strengthen the relationships of married couples.

In the United States, couples can attend Presbyterian Marriage Encounter, which, according to their website, is "a weekend experience designed to give married couples the opportunity to examine their life together. The emphasis is on communication between husband and wife, who spend a weekend away from the distractions of everyday life, concentrating on each other."

Counselling options

Ontario Association for Marriage and Family Therapy – will direct you to a therapist in your area. www.oamft.on.ca

Steady Hands Marriage Recovery Ministry – a Christian ministry devoted to preventing divorce through workshops, courses, coaching and counselling. www.steadyhands.org

Marriage Prep – a pre-marital weekend course in the Greater Toronto Area. www.marriageprep.com

The RELATE Institute – an online questionnaire designed to help you understand how factors in your family life, personality and values, social interactions and relationships can affect your marriage. www.relate-institute.org

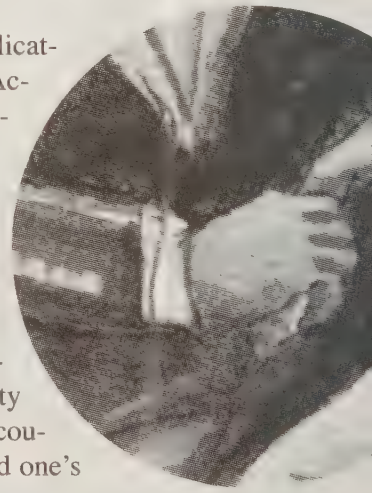
Enrich Canada Inc. – provides questionnaires that can be administered to couples, and a program to help overcome identified challenges. www.empoweringcouples.ca

Marriage Encounter – for couples who are already married and want to deepen and strengthen their relationship. www.wwmecanada.org

FamilyLife Canada – for couples wanting to learn more about strengthening their marriage. www.familylifecanada.com

Family Life Ministries – offers seminars on all stages of marriage and family life for couples and clergy, and also offers resources targeting men. www.familylifeministries.net

IN CONCLUSION



Marriage has always been complicated, but it is worth fighting for. According to the Christian Commitment Research Institute, married couples and those with a high level of religiosity report higher levels of happiness and wellbeing. CCRI also reports that virtually all forms of civil engagement are higher for married people, noting that the safety of a marital relationship gives a couple the desire and ability to extend one's self into the community.

"If you want to bring the relationship back to a faith perspective, you have to think of Jesus of Nazareth," said Denyer. "He was anti-power, and was about loving, caring and being compassionate. Jesus made himself vulnerable."

Amy MacLachlan has been married for 17 glorious months.

Faith, Love, Marriage and Family

A traditional couple share their non-traditional secrets and prayers

by Marilyn and John Carr

Ours is a traditional marriage, nurtured and supported by participation in the Christian church and by faith that was shaped in our original family and church experiences. We met at a PYPS meeting in 1957 and married in 1962.

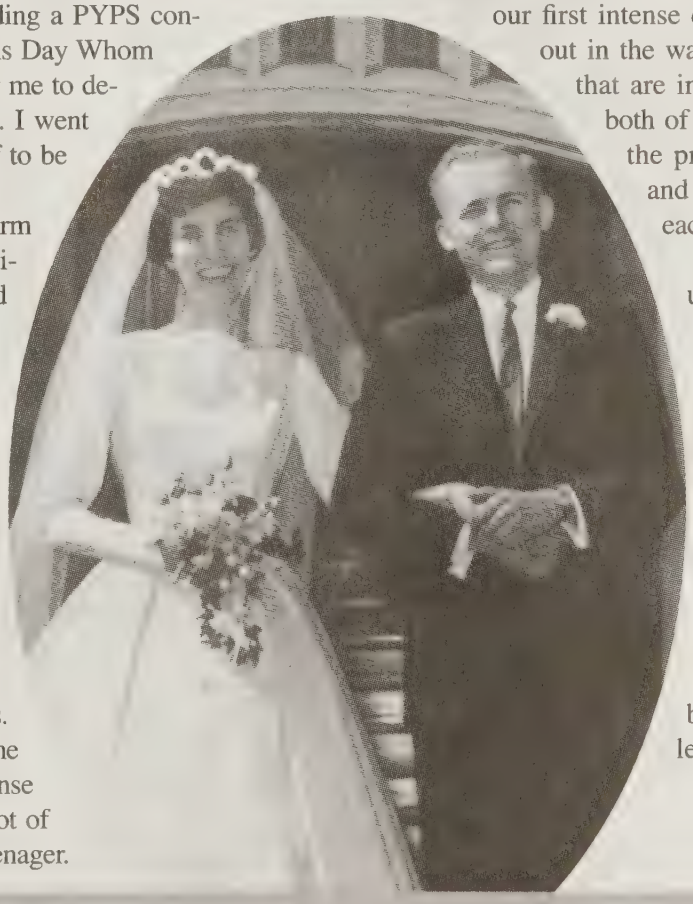
Marilyn: My family shared a Celtic culture and a Presbyterian faith. My father's pioneer ancestors cleared land in the 1790s, built a log cabin, established themselves as stonemasons and raised a large family. They set aside land on which a Presbyterian church was built. As a child, I attended anniversary services there each June surrounded by an overflow congregation, 80 per cent of whom were relatives. There, I was known as the daughter of Len Thomson but I knew I was a child of God. In my early 20s, while attending a PYPS conference (the theme was Choose This Day Whom You Will Serve) I felt God nudging me to decide what I would do with my life. I went to Ewart College to prepare myself to be a professional church worker.

John: My parents, both from farm families, were not particularly religious although they had attended Methodist Sunday schools. A significant element in my faith formation was my mother, and maternal grandmother, who sang hymns as they did the housework. A favourite of theirs, and of mine still, is The Old Rugged Cross. I now know that I began to feel close to God, a closeness that reflected awareness of my mother's love for me, as I was around her when she was singing those hymns. The ministers and other people I came to know in church nurtured that sense of the closeness of God. I spent a lot of time at church as a preteen and teenager. When I shared my discernment, in Grade 11 (as a result of PYPS experiences similar to Marilyn's), that I was being called to be a minister, the response of most people was "of course."

Marilyn and John: Our first significant conversation occurred when John arranged to sit next to Marilyn at a Presbytery PYPS Good Friday morning breakfast. We became engaged in discussing something from the service, emerging from our intense discussion to realize that those around us were long since ready to leave.

As a young married couple, we tried to develop the habit of praying together in a traditional way. That did not work for us, although it has always been important for us to say grace together at the evening meal. Our shared prayer life, like our first intense conversation, is primarily lived out in the way that we talk about the things that are important to one or the other or both of us—meaningful conversation in the presence of God that intensifies and enhances our relationship with each other.

This is a rather non-traditional understanding of prayer. It is grounded in our experience of growing up in families and other relationships in which the presence of God and the reality of God's love was a given. Our experience runs parallel to that of Malcolm Boyd, as reflected in his 1960s collection of prayers, *Are You Running with Me, Jesus?* It resonates with a comment made by Dr. David Hay at Knox College during a lecture on prayer,



Three scenes from a marriage: Opening day, May 26, 1962. Photo by N. Perry.

Participation in congregations that practice the presence of God has been a significant factor in deepening our relationship with each other and with God





Scene two: left, that seventies family: Marilyn, James, Jane and John. Photo by John Carr. And, below, the family continues: John, Jennifer, Marilyn, Jane, Marcus and James.

when he looked out at the University of Toronto campus and wondered out loud what it would be like if we "prayed with our eyes open."

Participation in congregations that practice the presence of God has been a significant factor in deepening our relationship with each other and with God. Those congregations, and the presbyteries of which John has been a member, have had their share of struggles and conflicts. The sense that we have been "muddling through" in the presence of God, assured of God's love, has saved the day and been good training for our personal muddling through.

Knowing that our relationship is being lived out in the presence of God means that there is no escaping the truth about what is going on. Like any other couple, we have our conflicts and struggles. Truth seeking in the context of conflict or family trauma is made safe by the knowledge that God loves us even when we don't like each other or ourselves very much!

We have both been involved in meaningful paid and volunteer work in the church and community throughout our marriage and understand that to be a significant element in the development of our faith and the deepening of our relationship. The work we have done has also helped us develop self-awareness and relational skills that have benefitted our relationship.

We have been challenged to be the best that we can be by the many crises, and the joy, of parenting and grandparenting. Both of our children live nearby. Our daughter Jane, and her family, are active in the same church as we are, with Jane and John both serving as elders. Our intellectually challenged son, James, attends church with us each Sunday. When we asked him, after he took Communion for the first time, about the meaning of Communion, James replied, "God loves me." We very much enjoy the inquisitiveness of our two preschool grandchildren and their unsophisticated way of loving and seeking love. We have been blessed by the two dogs that have been our family pets during the last 23 years (recently our dog licked the tears off the cheek of a grieving friend). In many ways, throughout our marriage, our children, our grandchildren, and our dogs have been "Christ for us."

And we do play, sing and listen to sacred music in our home!

In today's society, stories such as ours are becoming relatively infrequent—almost dinosauric. Songs that communicate the essentials of the God-human relationship are not what most teenagers and young adults listen to these days. There is little reinforcement in families and in society for young people and young adults to participate in the Christian Church, to experience relationship with God and to grow in that relationship, and to practice the presence of God and know that God loves me/us. Fewer couples give priority to developing their own faith and the faith of their children. We are not talking about drilling a belief system into people's heads but about living relationships that practice God's presence. It seems to us what we need in marriage and family relationships and in the Christian church.

Marilyn is a homemaker, now retired from a career that has included secretarial and administrative work, church staff positions in Christian education and pastoral care, and volunteer management in community service agencies.

John is a semi-retired pastoral therapist and educator who has been a parish minister. They live in Edmonton.

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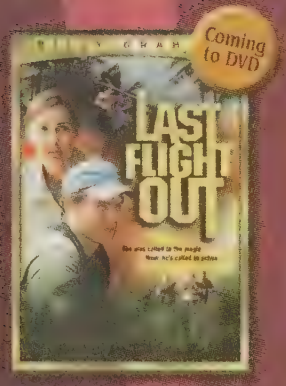


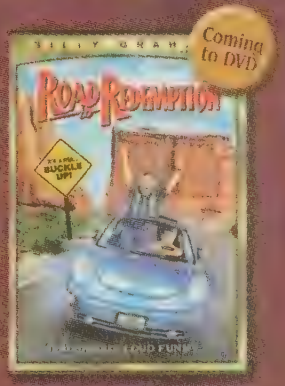
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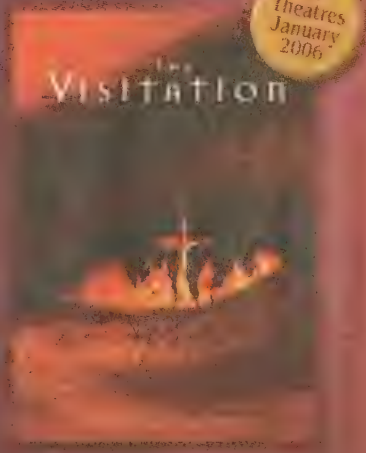
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A small slice of paradise

Camp Douglas offers nature and faith

BY NANCY DEVINE



Camp Douglas, a 4.5-hectare camp near Roberts Creek on B.C.'s Sunshine Coast, is a small slice of paradise offering campers the opportunity to commune with nature, try new outdoor experiences and develop close personal relationships.

"We aren't like the large summer camps, we're smaller, and faith-focused," says Gordi 'Bear' Whitelaw, the camp's director. "At the peak of the summer, if we have 100 campers, we're full. That means you get to know everyone—every kid, every leader. We can't compete with the large camps offering sailing or horseback riding, but we can offer the chance to build relationships."

Just after the Second World War, the Women's Missionary Society bought the land and donated it to the Presbyterian Church as a camp so children might have a chance to get away from the big city.





'Here, we work to make sure that kids know that God loves them no matter what, and that the Bible shows us how to be a good person'



PHOTO: CHRIS "MERLIN" EMBREE

"It's kind of turned into the suburbs," says Whitelaw. "But we still have our own private beach on the ocean and great relationships with the local residents. In the off-season, the local Waldorf School uses the camp for some of their programs — we see it as a way to reach out into the community."

Camp Douglas also welcomes sponsored campers from the Union Gospel Mission in Vancouver, and throughout the year the camp is used for meetings, retreats and seminars.

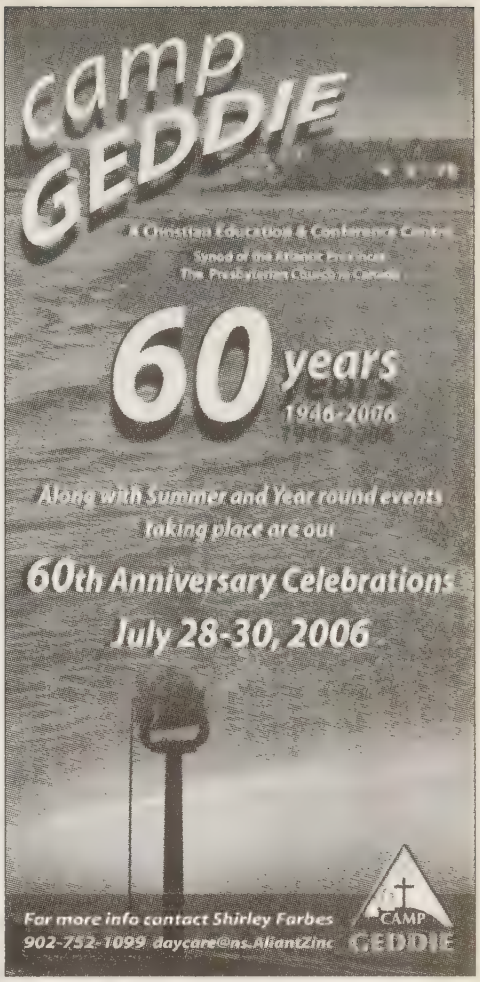


The property has a large patch of old-growth rainforest, a modern lodge, a spacious dining hall, playing fields, fire pits and an outdoor chapel.

In July and August, it is alive with campers, ranging in age from four to 17, and a family camping session. Each session is focused not only on having summer fun, but also developing a deeper faith and creating lasting memories.

"We start each day with a worship service, and our camp fire each evening is also a devotional vesper service," says Whitelaw. "We have a great time exploring faith and creating memories. Lots of our volunteers and leaders were former campers who have been coming to camp for years. They have wonderful memories about vespers and their whole camping experience with us."

Many of them, he adds, complete leaders in training sessions at the



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- 'Shannon has grown spiritually so much during her years at Cherith. She loves it there and can't wait until next year.'
- 'This was Natalie's first time away from home and she had a wonderful time. Listening to all her amazing memories makes me wish I were 12 years old again. She is already dreaming of next summer at Camp Cherith'.

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camp and then help staff each summer.

"They are truly invested in the camp, they are really caring, and work hard to make sure the kids have great memories to carry home with them," Whitelaw adds.

Programs include archery, arts and crafts, which has its own building devoted to creative endeavours, and an extensive waterfront program with sea kayaking and sea canoeing.

"Archery is very popular here," says Whitelaw. "It's an activity where you can see a kid progress from not being able to shoot an arrow at all to where they are hitting the target — and then there's Knukleball. It's huge. It's a form of volleyball — but the ball has to hit the ground on every play. We have games that go on forever."

Whitelaw became camp director in 1993, after seven years living in the Ukraine and running several arts and sports camps there. Certified as a candidate for the Ministry to Word and Sacrament, and giving sermons while still in his teens, he feels his call involves not only camping, but also working with youth to prepare them for leadership. He says he learns a little more about himself each camping season.

"When I first came here, I was surprised at how excited the kids were about being called for something like Bible study," he says. "You wouldn't think they would get that excited about it. But, I've learned that kids are pretty spiritual, and we have a great worship leader who really gets them involved in the stories. Last summer, they read the story of Lydia and the importance of her purple cloth. So, they heard the story and then they worked at dyeing the cloth. The story really came alive for them."

He gives full credit to the camp staff. "We have been blessed to have staff that understands what Luther meant when he said that to work is to pray," says Whitelaw. "In serving the kids, they find a different kind of freedom. For them, the summer is not just working and having fun — sure they have fun, but they also are here for the kids. When that balance is way out of whack, the

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"We have a great time exploring faith and creating memories. Lots of our volunteers and leaders were former campers who have been coming to camp for years



PHOTO: CHRIS "MERLIN" EMBREE

kids know. They feel called to serve God by working with the kids."

The kid-focus continues right into the kitchen at Camp Douglas, where meals are both delicious and kid-friendly, he says.

"We have a great cook at the camp who makes everything from scratch, including fresh bread, and that is such a joy to see the kids on soup and sandwich day, some of them have never seen anyone cut into a fresh loaf of bread."



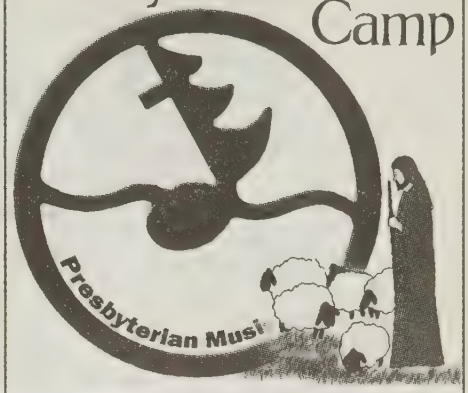
Whitelaw doesn't see summer camp and finding a meaningful faith experience as being mutually exclusive.

"It's important to teach kids that God loves you always, even when you make a mistake," he says. "Here, we work to make sure that kids know that God loves them no matter what, and that the Bible shows us how to be a good person. This is just a phenomenal location for a Christian community. We direct everything we do here towards God, and I know that will have a lasting impact on their lives."

For more information about Camp Douglas, visit the website at www.campdouglas.ca or call 1-866-885-3355.

Nancy Devine is a freelance writer.

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Some key ingredients at Camp Geddie: left, a dock and still waters; below, laughs and good friends.

Hallowed ground

Just a week later a shy child gains her self confidence at Camp Geddie

BY ANGELA CRUICKSHANK



Camping ministry is one of the most powerful ministries we have in the church. Not only are people surrounded in Christian community for more time in one week than they might be all year (if they are fortunate enough to attend church and Sunday school on a regular basis) but it shows them that there is a way to live their lives in this world for Christ. A large percentage of our campers at Geddie claim no affiliation with a church. For some campers it is the only exposure they will have to the gospel and Christianity all year.

My journey into camping ministry began when I was 10 years old. Along with my sister and several friends I headed off for my first week away from home. My memories of camp are very similar to those of campers who have been coming to Camp Geddie for the past 60 years.

I was a very shy child and spending a week away from home with strangers was scary for me. I was a bit homesick. I wrote some letters to mom and dad. But, over the week I became more confident and remember trying to comfort my sister who was more homesick than me, and I didn't want to go home when it was over. Also, I met one of my counsellors, Linda Barron, with whom I am still a friend today.

At 16, I completed the Leader in Training program with Audrey Cameron, whom I had known for several years as Synod Youth Worker, as the director. It was my experience in LIT and her example throughout my teens that encouraged me towards wanting to be involved in youth ministry.

I had a great experience in LIT; we formed a tight community and learned a lot about ourselves, each other and Christ. I wanted to offer that same experience to the LIT's last summer as I co-led the program.

I was told once that I had a quiet faith and feel that God brought me along in His time allowing me to develop a relationship with Him in a gradual way, without those dramatic life altering experiences. I have seen how He comes into each of our lives in different ways and at different times and am thankful for the way He has made a place in my heart and allowed it to grow over time.

In 1946 the youth camp of the Synod of the Atlantic Provinces moved to its current site near Merigomish, N.S., claiming 12 acres and an old building that became the main lodge and was named after John Geddie, the first Presbyterian missionary from Canada. Over the years tents slowly gave way to cabins and new facilities were built including a washhouse, the Irwin Lodge used year-round as a Retreat/Conference Center and the Margaret MacDougall Lodge offering accommodation for smaller groups.

The overnight summer camp offers eight sessions in a modified unit-style of camping for those seven to 17 years old as well as a family camp weekend in July and a four week Leader In Training program. Campers spend their days in co-ed units completing duties and participating in various activities such as swimming in the ocean, canoeing on the lake, participating in Bible study, learning about PWS&D mission projects, exploring the world around them in nature and making arts and crafts. All campers share meals together as well as the evenings filled with games, vespers and campfire, led by unit groups each day. Year round offerings include events led by the Agape Committee including all-ages events and rental opportunities.

We have been given an amazing gift in the place of Geddie - it truly is holy ground! The presence of the Holy Spirit is tangible as you walk through the wooded paths, feel the sand between your toes or watch the glorious sunset over the crashing waves. It is a place that allows me to know how small a part I play in the big picture of things but also to be reminded over and over again that God cares for me more than I can ever comprehend. If he created all of this and is in control of it, why should I have any doubt that he created me just the way I am and loves me for it and is in complete control of my life.

Angela Cruickshank is the convener of Camp Geddie's program committee. • For more information: http://campgeddie.pccatlantic.ca or contact Shirley Forbes, registrar: RR3, New Glasgow, NS, B2H-5C6; 902-752-1099.



The perfect summer vacation

A Youth In Mission trip to European villages proves an 'awesome experience'

BY KENDRA SHAW

Did hanging out with cows while doing construction on a dairy farm, learning Hungarian from Roma kids, riding for hours in a hot van and being cooped up inside a water tower sandpapering the rust ever cross your mind as the perfect vacation? That's what I did, and trust me it was.

This was part of my experience with Youth In Mission last July. Our first service project was in Ozd, a village in Romania. We spent the week working on a dairy farm that is affiliated with an alcoholic rehabilitation centre. As a team, we built cow stalls out of cement, shucked corn and made two big holes in the wall for an office window inside the barn. I learned more about cows than I will ever need to know! One thing that had the most impact on me was the fellowship with the local missionaries. I miss those large family dinners. A bonus was staying in an old run-down castle built in the 1600s.

Next, we travelled to Ukraine where we worked at a Roma camp. I didn't know what to expect, but it turned out to be an amazing week. Each day the kids brought tons of energy and joy to everything. They didn't seem to mind that we couldn't speak their language, and they always welcomed us with smiles and laughter. It was great to see and share the mission and outreach that is provided to these kids. Like normal camps, everyday had a Bible theme, craft time and lots of activities. Many of the songs we sang were the same as the ones we sing in Canada, and it was lots of fun teaching them some of the English lyrics. One of the funniest things of the week was seeing how much these kids loved having their daily showers. This was quite different from my experience working at camps in Canada where the campers' goal is to go the whole week without bathing. The end of camp came quick, and before we knew it the kids were back home. But, to our delight, we went to their village for Sunday worship the very next day. I'll never forget their faces as we arrived at the village. We were pulled in every direction as they tried to show us around. It was an extremely special but emotional morning as we got to see the poverty they live in. This put things in perspective about what they experienced each day. I realized how incredible it was that they were so loving and welcoming to us despite their circumstances.

The final project was in another village in Ukraine. We helped out on a construction site building a large addition to a Christian school. We sanded the inside of a water tower and painted it, painted many doors and shovelled a lot of dirt. Because it was the last week, it was nice just being together as a team, debriefing and reflecting on the trip.

Reflecting back, I'm thankful for so many aspects of my YIM experience. Our leaders, Steve Ross and Sonya Henderson, always knew the right things to say and their sense of humour made even the tedious tasks fun. I'm also very thankful for all of the people we met along the way, the missionaries and leaders, and all the knowledge and insight they provided.

Looking back, I can see the many ways that God provided for us in all that we did. It was awesome to experience His love in a new and powerful way in a foreign land with new people. This trip has opened my eyes regarding the world of mission, and the work God calls us to do. It has instilled in me a desire to do more projects like this, and I'm looking forward to seeing what God is calling me to next.

Special thanks to Reuben and Katherine St Louis, leaders, Steve Ross and Sonya Henderson, and team members Shauna Whitford, Rachel van Blaricom, Sarah Capp, Claire Leminski and Ian Beck-MacNeil, and also to my home congregation, Westwood, Winnipeg, for their prayers, encouragement and financial support.

Kendra Shaw looks forward to her next adventure.

michael coren

The West is decadent and decayed

We have managed to convert so much that is golden into base metal

It's very comforting for us to dismiss as extreme, unreasonable and even insane all of the demands and complaints of Islamic fundamentalism. In an unstable age it reassures us of our own decency and righteousness.

It is a self-evident truth, of course, that suicide bombings and the murder of innocent people are repugnant. Here there is no argument. Similarly with some, if not all, of the geo-political aims of Muslim terrorists.

But what of their insistence that western society is decadent? Can we as Christians really ignore this criticism and assume that because a fanatic makes the point it contains no truth?



Our most successful television shows present adultery and promiscuity as being sophisticated and fashionable. Pity the wretch who knows only one partner for life

Just last week my seven-year-old daughter was looking for dinosaur photos on the Internet. Luckily we are always close when she is allowed on the computer. Because there on the page, totally out of context and designed to snare innocents, was a horribly pornographic website.

Which should come as no surprise. As glorious as the Internet is, it is used by millions of people today as a source of onanistic images. Put simply, the West has managed to turn so much that is golden into base metal.

Sex itself should be the supreme and supremely pleasurable act of physical love between two married people. Instead it has become a commercial enterprise, frequently a loveless exchange of bodily fluid as the mindless worship at the cult of the orgasm.

Yet the West is not decadent.

If sex is supposed to be a manifestation of love, children should be living icons of marital fertility. Instead, abortion rates rise steadily and ever-new methods of destroying unborn life are found by weird and amoral science.

This is if conception is even allowed to take place. Pills, rubber, patches and devices are employed to prevent what should be exquisite. Birth and babies. Individual responsibility is rejected and the notion of celibacy until marriage scorned as an archaic fantasy.

Yet the West is not decadent.

When marriage does occur it is thought in many circles almost eccentric for a couple to remain faithful. Our most successful television shows present adultery and promiscuity as being sophisticated and fashionable. Pity the wretch who knows only one partner for life.

Divorce is inevitable, single parent families are as complete as any other, drooling lust is only natural and the other litany of postmodern lies that tear away at the moral fabric of our society.

Yet the West is not decadent.

Men marry men, women marry women, teenagers become pregnant, the age of consent is constantly lowered and if anybody protests they are told that nobody cares and that such concerns are a digression from the real issues.

But what are those real issues? The gap between rich and poor is greater than it has been for a century and multinational corporations tell us what to drink, what to think and what to do. The environment is raped, the planet abused and our dinner portions grow larger.

Except in those nations colonized by Europe and North America and where people of darker skin scrape out a life and, more often, a death. Here we ignore and explain and justify.

Yet the West is not decadent.

Society, media and certain politicians encourage the casual use of drugs and there are increasingly loud calls by elites and activists for certain narcotics to be legalized or decriminalised.

It enables people to escape the incarceration of their own reality, which is in many ways the greatest tragedy of all. A life that should be full of love, family, children and joy becomes mundane and materialistic to the point where hash and hallucination are preferable to a shared moment with a loved spouse.

Video games where the goal is to kill policemen. Education where feelings matter more than facts. Games where steroids matter more than sportsmanship and entertainment where fights and fornication matter more than poetry and poignancy.

Yet the West is not decadent.

Fight the war on terror. But know as followers of Christ that sometimes defeat is to be found in the very core of victory. And know the West is, yes, decayed to its soul.

Michael Coren's website is www.michaelcoren.com.

Making connections in Nicaragua

Canadians help orphans, cancer patients and small churches

BY AMY MACLACHLAN



"There's nothing more satisfying than seeing the fruits of your labours." Annette Vickers and a PAN team in Nicaragua.

When Annette Vickers first travelled to Nicaragua in 1996 as part of a small mission team looking for a project to support, she had no idea where the fact-finding journey would lead her. Nearly 10 years later, Vickers is active as the director of PAN—Presbyterians Aiding Nicaraguans—facilitating eight to 12 group mission trips to the Central American country each year. "I love it!" she said. "There's nothing more satisfying than seeing the fruits of your labour with your own eyes. That's why the teams like it, they get to leave something tangible behind and they bond with the people they meet."

A member of Kortright, Guelph, Ont., the retired school teacher has watched the program grow to include numerous denominations, various Canadian sponsors that donate supplies, and a steadily growing list of partners in Nicaragua who need a helping hand.

The Child Evangelism Fellowship in Nicaragua is PAN's main connection, helping to coordinate projects and suggest where help is needed. One of the first endeavours of the mission teams is to build Sunday school classrooms (which often double as daily Christian schools) and small churches. The projects cost about $10,000 US. Teams raise the funds necessary for building, and individuals pay for their own travel expenses. "God has never let us down," said Vickers. "They always wonder if they can, but every team has been able to raise the money. It's never been an issue."

Until last year, there was no Presbyterian Church in Nicaragua. Today, there are eight Korean Presbyterian Churches in the country, and PAN, a registered charity in Canada and Nicaragua, has just begun to partner with them.

Vickers accompanies the teams on their trips, along with one other board member. She figures she's been to the country, one of the poorest in the hemisphere, about 40 times. Massive unemployment, low per capita income, high external debt and one of the most unequal distributions of income on the planet plague the country, where half of the population lives below the poverty line.

Despite these setbacks, Vickers said the evangelical church is growing, with Sunday schools often filled with 150 children, even though only 20 adults are at the service.

In addition to building projects, teams visit children's hospitals, where they paint pictures with cancer patients, bring gifts and supplies for infants, and medicine for those in need. The children's paintings are brought back to

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Ph.D. candidate

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Professor Andrew Irvine
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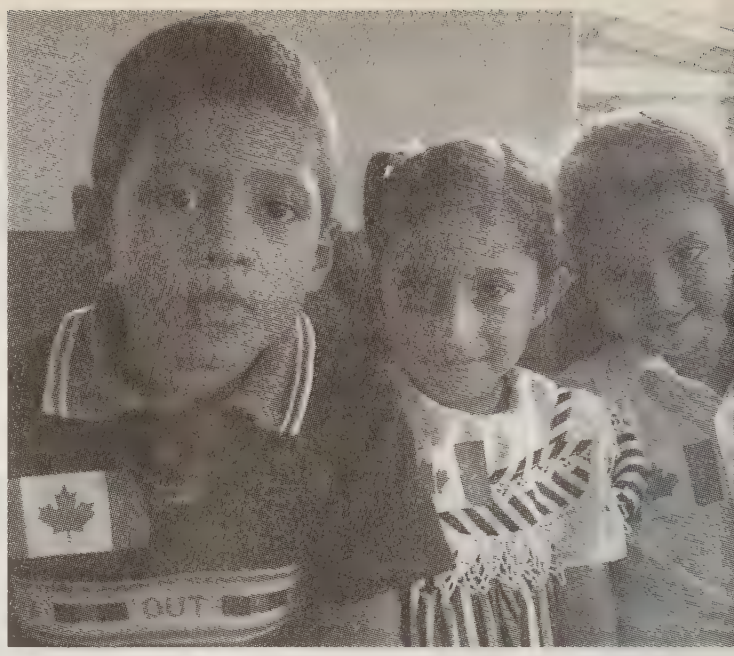
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Despite massive unemployment and extremely low per capita income, the evangelical church continues to grow and Sunday schools are overflowing in Nicaragua.

Canada and sold, and the profits are used to buy more supplies. Money is also raised through PAN's hospital and emergency funds to pay for costly procedures such as CAT scans. Teams visit orphanages, where they do crafts and play games with children, child feeding centres, where they help serve and prepare food, and they recently began visiting a women's hospital. And although they don't overtly evangelize, teams often hand out Bibles along the way.

A team of eight recently went to northern Nicaragua carrying 400 packages of supplies including rice, oil, hygiene products, used clothing and shoes. The large shipment was made possible with the help of the Canadian air force who had the clothes and shoes in storage and made a humanitarian flight to the country. Such large shipments are rare because of the cost, said Vickers, but are a huge help when possible.

PAN also brought along two medical aid packages known as physician travel packs donated by Health Partners International of Canada. Each pack has enough medicine and supplies to treat up to 1,000 children. Health Partners is a Canadian medical aid agency that ships vaccines and medical supplies to developing countries.

Although the physical assistance is always appreciated, Vickers said it is the fact that people came at all that leaves the biggest impression. "Because sending teams can be expensive, people wonder why we don't just send money. But when people go there, they get excited about mission and they want to go back. You have to get people down there."

She told the story of a very poor church in Managua that a team from her congregation visited in March. The young pastor of the church was amazed by their visit. "It thrilled him to his very core that people came," said Vickers. "He was amazed that people in Canada would spend their own money just to see his little church. We need to be there and make those connections."

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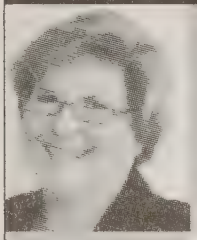
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Joanna Adams

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Marriage Quiz

The following quiz is intended solely for the amusement of married couples. Keep in mind that quiz results should not be brought up during petty arguments, loud disagreements or in front of the children. Please answer the questions honestly, bearing in mind that while it is impossible to fail this test, your answers may determine whether or not you spend the night on the couch.

1. When you are wrong, you will admit it to your partner:
   a. Within seconds
   b. Just as soon as cows produce root beer
   c. Usually before sunset

2. On your most recent vacation, you:
   a. Strolled sun-soaked beaches barefoot, then basked in the glow of each other's eyes
   b. Left messages on each other's answering machines
   c. Had to come home for a rest

3. Which of the following most accurately describes the frequency of your love-making?
   a. Tri-weekly
   b. Try weakly
   c. Try weekly

4. Complete this sentence: I believe the Children of Israel wandered in the wilderness for 40 years because:
   a. God was testing their marriages
   b. Moses refused to ask his wife for directions
   c. Moses wanted them to really appreciate the Promised Land once they got there

5. When you're watching TV together, who controls the remote?
   a. We do not watch television; we go for walks and talk about our feelings
   b. I do
   c. Whoever gets it first

6. The food which best sums up your spouse's kiss:
   a. Red hot chili peppers
   b. Airline omelet
   c. Hot apple pie

7. The movie title that best sums up your sex life:
   a. Some Like It Hot
   b. Gone With The Wind
   c. As Good As It Gets

8. Your definition of communication is:
   a. I am attentive to my partner's communication needs. I listen well and share openly my thoughts, aspirations and feelings.
   b. Nintendo
   c. Sorry, I was distracted. Could you repeat the question?

9. Your 14-year-old daughter asks if she can go on a date. You will:
   a. Explain to her that open communication, trust, dependability, and good character are the determining factors in such a decision; that when she shows all of these characteristics simultaneously and is mature enough to set an example for her little sister she will be permitted to take part in group dating, followed by double dating, both of which will prepare her for the responsibility of single couple dating at a later time, always chaperoned
   b. Laugh uncontrollably
   c. Briefly consider installing landmines in the front yard

10. Aliens from the planet Plutanza have landed on your roof to observe your marriage and file a report. They describe you as:
    a. Inseparable
    b. Single
    c. Tired, but fun. Let's import this lifestyle for the benefit of our fellow Plutanzanians

11. It's 12:30 a.m. and neither of you can sleep. Your spouse says, "Honey, I'm hungry, would you get me a slice of cheese?" You say:
    a. Is that all, Sweetheart? How about a salad with croutons?
    b. Zzzzzzzzzzzz
    c. How thick shall I slice it?

How to score: First of all, you have to romance your wife, then… whoops… wrong kind of scoring. If you answered "a" more than six times, thanks for taking this quiz during your honeymoon. We wish you all the best in the years ahead. If you found yourself gravitating to the "b" responses, please take an aspirin and resubscribe to this publication in the morning. Also … find a soft pillow. It's time to sleep on the couch. If you chose "c" five or more times, you've got a good thing going. Collect 17 bonus points if you also answered "a" more than once. Sounds like some flexibility, lots of laughter and a servant heart are keeping your marriage fresh.

Now, break out the ginger ale, it's time to try weekly!

Phil is a popular speaker and author. His new program "Laughing Matters" can be seen weekly on *100 Huntley Street*. Visit him at philcallaway.com



'Tis the season to remain teachable

Disciples don't have to know it all, but must be prepared to learn constantly

BY DAVID WEBBER



Last year for Lent I wrote about a little tit-bird that ended up causing me to eat a large crow. In said article I waxed eloquent about how we westerners, unlike the lowly easterner who has to rely on a hairy-tailed rodent to tell them when spring will occur, have a much better way to recognize the end of winter. I wrote how we westerners have the lovely little western wood-pewee who sings its plaintiff little "peee-weee song at the first harbinger of spring." Said article spawned two letters to the editor. One letter, published the following month, indicated a person irked at the implied put down of uppity Upper Canadians that I had attempted as a fringe benefit in the article, a charge to which I should probably plead guilty.

The second letter, a very thoughtful one, was sent to me by the editor for a response. It was from a fellow westerner indicating in the most grace-filled way that with regards to the western wood-pewee I didn't have a clue about what I was talking about. It was from Dr. Ronald Bremner of Saskatoon, and in part the letter read: "I agree with David Webber that the sweet peee-weee, either cheerful or plaintive depending on the mood of the listener, is a truly pleasant sound of February, both in the Cariboo country and here in Saskatchewan, but the avian messenger which he hears this month cannot be the Western Wood-Pewee, a member of the flycatcher family and an entirely insectivorous bird which could not survive more than a day or two in such snowy terrain. The Western Wood-Pewee does not return from its winter migration to any place in western Canada until early or mid-May. The call or song is surely that of our year-round resident chickadee, and has been misinterpreted by many bird-lovers here as well as in B.C."

Bremner, a medical doctor and a resident of Saskatoon for over 50 years, an elder in his church for 47 years, and more pertinent to this discussion, an avid and published bird watcher for some "three score years and ten," is no doubt absolutely right. I am most likely wrong. Although I have yet to be successful in stalking a call since his letter, his logic is sound. Birds which eat bugs don't show up till dinner does. In the Cariboo, bug season is nigh on to May and the pee-wee'er I have heard in February since I was a snotty nosed kid has most likely been a common chickadee in verbal disguise. I wrote Bremner back pleading ignorance and to thank him for what he taught me and asked permission to use his letter in this article.

You see, Bremner teaches me something, and not just about birds. What he teaches me is to always remain teachable. I share Christ's church with a woman more mature than I am in years, wisdom and faith; who knows her Scripture and theology much better than I do. She is not the only one, but what makes her such a delight as a sister in the Lord is she actually acts like my sister (just as Dr. Bremner acted as my sibling in the

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Lord in his letters to me). Many times when I have challenged her biblical or theological interpretation she has come to me afterwards, shared with me her perspective and sought more clarity about mine. After more thought and prayer she has often phoned me during the week to thank me for providing her with new insight. At other times she has phoned me to suggest I consider this or that further and I have had to phone her back and thank her for providing me with new insight. She has said to me over and over again that her main job as a disciple of Jesus (and by inference, mine too) is to remain teachable.

I like that. I think it was Tony Campolo in his book *Seize the Day* who wrote to the effect that Christ never called believers, he called disciples. Campolo's point is that believers adhere to well developed intellectually expressed facts or dogma, disciples seek to learn of Christ and to follow him in obedience. Believers focus on what they believe, what they know to be true. Disciples focus on what Christ is teaching them, on what they have yet to learn as they sit at Christ's feet, in what they are to do to obey Him. A disciple's task is not to know it all, but it is to remain teachable, to be always learning.

Lent is just around the corner again and originally this is what the season of Lent was all about. Easter was when people were baptized into Christ. Lent was the time period before Easter when they were prepared. Lent was when they were taught. Lent was when they became disciples, for the rest of their lives. Lent was the season of becoming teachable. And just as Easter was the anniversary of every Christian's baptism, Lent was the anniversary of every Christian's discipleship. Lent was the time that came each year to remind one that a Christian's life was wrapped up in remaining teachable for Christ, for the rest of one's life.

Lent is not the time to be giving things up, or donning sackcloth and ashes. It is the time to be taking things on and donning an excited anticipation that only learning can supply

It seems to me that with this in mind, Lent is not the time to be giving things up, or donning sackcloth and ashes. It is the time to be taking things on and donning an excited anticipation that only learning can supply. If ever there was a time to join a Bible study, this is the season. If ever there was a time to begin to contemplate Christ and His Word in meditation, this is the season. If ever there was a time to dive into one of the excellent books by Christian teachers, past and present, this the season. If ever there was a time to get your hands on some of the many excellent Christian audiovisual resources available, this is the season. If ever there was a time to learn about and take on service in Christ-like ways, this is the season. If ever there was a time to renew a commitment to remaining teachable, this is the season. Relish this season, this season of Lent, this season of remaining teachable, of learning and following. And I wonder, would the letters to the editor of this magazine look any different if they were written from this humble Lenten perspective? Hmmmmm?

Rev. David Webber is a contributing editor to the *Record*. He is a minister of the Cariboo, B.C. house church ministry. His most recent book is *Like a Winter's Aspen: Embracing the Creator's Fire*.

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AICKEN, Christena, As the first light of Advent began to push back the dark, and after 90 years of abundant living, Christena Aicken died. All her life was lived between the sea and the mountains that lifted, then dispersed the sea's damp. In her earliest years her spiritual gift was a soprano voice that she shared, in Kerrisdale and in Mission. In maturity her gift was hospitality. Travelling strangers shared it at her table, and, outdoors, in her park, with the stately needled and gothic trees that lit her welcoming arms with Gospel. She left this life as eagerly as she had lived it, longing for one human being who had long since loved her as the jewel of the creation, whom she had lost awhile.

DE GRAAF, Jack, passed away peacefully at his residence, Seeley's Bay, Ont., on December 28, 2005. Beloved husband of Kathy Duizer and dear father of Ida and her husband Rev. Dr. Andrew Human of St. Thomas, Ont., and Jane Billings of Seeley's Bay. Dear brother of Koos (Ada) de Graaf, Huib (Anneke) de Graaf all of Holland. Predeceased by brother Jaap de Graaf and sister Ada Snoek. Loving Opa of Patricia (Ben), Cynthia, Andrea, Gina and Mitchell. Also survived by several nieces and nephews.

KNOWLER, Bill, long time member and elder since 1971 of St. Andrew's Church, Windsor, Ont. He was the Clerk of the Kirk Session when he died on December 3, 2005 at age 76.

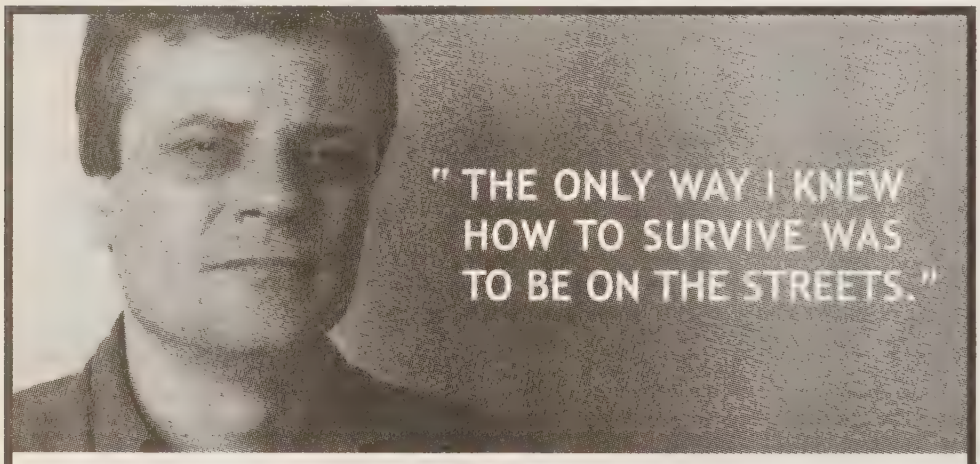
MARSHALL, Alexander Murray, aged 78 years, passed away after a brief illness on December 4, 2005. Alex was a faithful elder of the Church for 40 years, most recently at First Presbyterian Church, Thunder Bay, Ont.

WOODS, Stanley J., passed away peacefully on October 25, 2005. Born in Belfast, Ireland almost 95 years ago, Stan was a long-time, faithful elder of the Church of St. John & St. Andrew Presbyterian, Hamilton, Ont. He will be sadly missed by his many friends and loved ones.

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BY KENNETH STRIGHT

The Gospel According to Peanuts
(35th anniversary edition)
Robert L. Short; foreward by Martin E. Marty
Westminister John Knox Press

Why re-issue a book that is out-of-date and certainly out-of-touch with life today? Good question. Martin E. Marty tries to answer it in the foreward and pretty well says Short and Shultz have captured the essence of the greatest thinkers who impacted the mid-twentieth century... and it will do us all a great deal of good to go back and retrieve their gospel captured in cartoon. Besides, the youngest of those born after the writing of *The Gospel According to Peanuts* is now well over 40, a whole new generation can go back and see what shaped the thought of many people back in 1965 (as the Simpsons have shaped more thought than this world dreams possible and Harry Potter is still shaping in his never-ending quest for ... whatever).

So, are you hooked yet? Do you want to travel back in time to an age when ordinary people were treated to a dose of Barth or Niebuhr in their morning cartoons, and Kierkegaard or Kafka were quoted in quips to go with your morning Corn Flakes?

My dog-eared copy of the original 1965 version (a gift from a colleague of another generation) still sits on my shelf. It hasn't been down for awhile but it also has never made it to the discard bin. Every time I think of parting company with it, I merely flip through the pages to ...

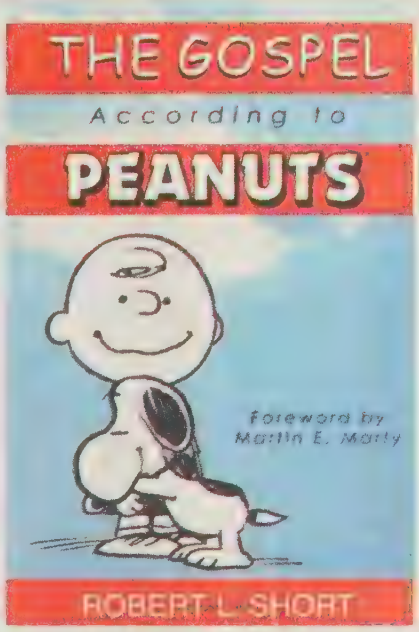
Charlie Brown: "Snoopy looks kind of cold doesn't he?"

Linus: "I'll say he does ... maybe we'd better go over and comfort him." "Be of good cheer, Snoopy."

Charlie Brown: "Yes, be of good cheer."

Snoopy: (left confused as Linus and Charlie walk away into the falling snow.)

I can never think of James 2:15 or Matthew 25 without this particular cartoon coming to mind... and the book slips back on my shelf for another decade (or two).



Have you ever thought of Charlie Brown as the personification of a Presbyterian? I have (and do). The likeable and loveable butt of everyone's anger or angst or ...

(Violet yelling at Charlie Brown): "... and you're weak and spineless and wishy-washy!"

Linus: "She really took you apart, didn't she, Charlie Brown?"

Charlie: "Uh-huh ... step by step, verse by verse and line by line ...."

Linus: "You sound like a victim of higher learning."

Such a good-natured guy (Charlie the Presbyterian). So ...

Why is the football always pulled away at the last minute? Charlie Brown: "Do you think I'm crazy? Do you think you can fool me with the same trick every year?"

Or the ball game always lost: Charlie Brown: "Another ball game lost! Good grief! I get tired of losing... everything I do, I lose!" Lucy: "Look at it this way, Charlie Brown ... we learn more from losing than we do from winning." Charlie: "That makes me the smartest person in the world!!"

Or the advice so devastating? Lucy: "Discouraged again, eh, Charlie Brown? You know what your trouble is? The whole trouble with you is that you're YOU."

Charlie Brown: "Well, what in the world can I do about that?"

Lucy: "I don't pretend to be able to give advice ... I merely point out the trouble." (Please send her comments onto the Long Range Strategic Planning Committee of the church!).

And Charlie Brown muddles his way through life, always groping for understanding and meaning from the big picture that transcends the everyday difficulties he encounters ... and his world really is no kinder or gentler than ours but he still touches everyone of us where it counts: in the soul and in our quest for significance in a world we rarely understand and a universe we hardly comprehend.

Lucy and Charlie under a star-studded sky: Charlie Brown: "And, as I am alone here on earth among millions of people, that tiny star is out there alone among millions and millions of stars ... Does that make any sense, Lucy? Do you think it means anything?"

Lucy: "Certainly ... It means you're cracking up, Charlie Brown!"

Rev. Kenneth Stright is a Presbyterian in the best sense.

Remaining faithful, now and in the future

Lambton-West Middlesex examines this time of transition

BY AMY MACLACHLAN

The strong rural connection enjoyed by many of the congregations in the Presbytery of Lambton-West Middlesex is evident at the two-point charge of St. Andrew's, Watford, and Knox, Thedford, where they set aside a Sunday each year to pray for their farm families and to focus on the gift and responsibility of being keepers of God's earth. "I am a strong advocate for everyone being involved," said Rev. Christine O'Reilly. "Church is not a spectator sport!"

O'Reilly regularly affirms that Christian service happens beyond church walls and activities. "We remind our congregations that any and every thing they do in the community—coaching hockey, involvement with the construction of a new medical centre, or serving on school council—matters."

Both churches feature lay leadership in weekly worship, and at times lay worship teams and preachers design the entire service. The endeavour is part of O'Reilly's determination to make the most of small congregations. She co-authored *Where 20 or 30 Are Gathered: Worship in small membership congregations*, with Rev. Peter Bush of Knox, Mitchell.

Lambton-West Middlesex is composed of 14 charges and 21 congregations, with three vacancies. Two ministers will retire this year and a student minister will graduate and move on. "We're examining what it means to be the church," said Rev. Ray Hodgson, presbytery clerk and minister at St. Andrew's, Sarnia, founded in 1841. "How do we carry on our mission and ministry that God has entrusted to us?"

Hodgson said the economic downturn in Sarnia in the early 1990s put a crunch on the churches there, as people in leadership positions moved elsewhere to find work. Ministry became difficult as budgets were slashed, programs ended and churches were left scrambling to find new leaders. However, things are staring to improve. Hodgson said the last two or three years has seen an economic turn-around for the community, and people are even moving back. "It's exciting," he said. "Retirement condos are going up along the waterfront and we're seeing an influx of 'junior seniors'—we're really starting to notice that."

On the downside, Hodgson said the population is aging, with schools closing and families and young people in congregations dwindling. Although not a huge loss, membership dropped by 36 between 2003 and 2004 (from 2,374 to 2,338). Attendance and adherents also decreased.

"But what we do have is people who are the core of the community who have a solid background in the church and are stepping into positions of leadership," said Hodgson, whose near-six years in the presbytery makes him one of its longest-serving ministers. He noted that weekly attendance is growing in several congregations—even though this doesn't always mean a growth in membership. "All the churches in the area are looking seriously at what membership is all about. We have to, given the current context."

Knox, Thedford, established in 1866, sits in a community of only 800, but draws from a much wider area. It has benefited from a new mindset that celebrates the gifts the rural church can offer and refuses to be defeated by



Knox, Dawn Township, along with Point Edward Church, embrace their rural roots and grow soybean crops for Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

small numbers. "The congregation has seen a real turn around in the last 15 years, which began with a spiritual renewal," said O'Reilly. "'Die to live' became a reality when the congregation (averaging 20 on a Sunday) recognized they had nothing to lose and everything to gain. It was a renewal of faith and a renewal of fellowship that made all the difference. As minister, focusing on renewing worship and rebuilding the church as family was key. People began getting excited about faith and worship, and trying new things." The congregation is now about 70-strong.

Local mission initiatives include supplying mentors for students in need at the town's elementary school, and supporting the school snack program. Internationally, Knox has built a house in Nicaragua, worked on three projects in Southern Sudan, including building a school and raising more than $4,000 to buy goats for families there. The congregation sent a team to Mississippi in January to help clean up the devastation left by Hurricane Katrina.



The church is being used three mornings a week to support the Petrolia Breakfast Program that offers children from two area schools a healthy breakfast before school

St. Andrew's, Watford, was established in 1925, although the church was built in the 1860s. In a town of about 1,000, St. Andrew's is a family-based congregation, with four or more generations of families active there.

Ecumenical cooperation is a common occurrence in Watford, where a lay council of all the community churches plans and leads inter-church worship throughout the year. Community ministers and school principals work together on programs against violence, and to support respect for people, places and things during a special community week just prior to Halloween. The congregation also ministers to more than 80 children each week at the local elementary school through a bible club led by members of St. Andrew's and others in the community.

This strong attachment to the community keeps St. Andrew's aware of the need to respond to change. "The congregation recognizes that they are in a time of transition, and are working together to act and not simply react to the changing population base in Watford-Warwick," said O'Reilly. "We are actively discussing options for the Christian community in our town, and how we can remain faithful to God's calling now and in the future."

St. Andrew's, Petrolia, was established as a mission station in 1856. It has been linked with Knox, Dawn Township, since 1975. For the past four years, the children at Petrolia have been learning from the Rotation Workshop model of Sunday school. According to Rev. Dean Adlam, they have studied biblical stories through skits, art projects, story telling, videos, games and cooking projects. The children also host regular luncheons to raise money for a mission project that relates to the topic being studied.

"The children's hearts for mission has rubbed off on the rest of the Petrolia congregation," said Adlam. "The church is being used three mornings a week to support the Petrolia Breakfast Program that offers children from two area schools a healthy breakfast before school. St. Andrew's has also pledged to donate $3,000 for a Habitat for Humanity build in the area."

Knox, Dawn Township, a congregation of 25 members, will celebrate its 100th anniversary in June. For several years, Knox has grown soybean crops to raise money for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. Last year, 440 bushels were harvested from 11 acres of land. For the last two years, the congregation of Point Edward has been a part of this project by raising money to rent the land on which this crop is grown. The congregations got together last fall to celebrate the harvest.

The small congregation at West Adelaide, Kerwood, began with Rev. William Eoss Sutherland, one of the leading men of the early Presbyterian Church and a native of Scotland. Born in 1823, he attended Knox College, and was ordained in 1848. He remained at the same charge for more than 35 years, having the largest congregation in Western Ontario. West Adelaide has been linked with Knox, Centre Road, and St. Andrew's, Beechwood, (established in the 1830s) since 1947.

Knox, Camlachie, is linked with St. Andrew's, Wyoming (established in 1866). Knox offers various services to its community including premarital counselling, crisis counselling and pastoral visits (particularly to shut-ins).

The congregation of St. Giles, Sarnia, was formally organized in 1946 as a mission station, operating as a vacation Bible school under a tent on the present church property. The building has been upgraded over the years, including the installation of a 14 stop tracker-action pipe organ, unique in the Sarnia area, (the sanctuary also boasts a grand piano and a harpsichord), a handicapped access including an elevator and washroom, the revamping of the church kitchen, the addition of a sound system complete with hearing aids, new lighting and stained glass window, and refurbished rooms used for church school. St. Giles' website notes, "while proud of its history, [St. Giles] is actively and confidently looking to the future."

"What is God calling His people to do?" asked Hodgson. "Size doesn't matter. You have to look outward so the spirit has room to move. If you're looking inward, it doesn't matter how big you are."

called to wonder

CREATED BY ERIN WALTON



A LOVE STORY...

Every February we celebrate Valentine's Day by giving flowers, candy and cards to those we love. We do this in honour of Saint Valentine.

Legend has it that Valentine was a priest in third-century Rome. The emperor at that time, Claudius II, outlawed marriage for young men in hopes of building a stronger military base. Supposedly, Valentine decided this just wasn't fair and chose to marry young couples secretly. Another legend has it that Valentine was an imprisoned man who fell in love with his jailer's daughter. Before he died he sent the first 'Valentine' himself when he wrote her a letter and signed it 'Your Valentine', words still used on cards today.

Perhaps we'll never know the true story behind the man named St. Valentine, but this much is for sure, February has been the month to celebrate love for a long time, dating clear back to the Middle Ages.

There are many different kinds of love to celebrate.
Look up the following Bible verses to hear stories of amazing love.

Ruth & Naomi	Ruth 1:14-22
Jonathan & David	1 Samuel 18: 1-4, 19:1-7
Jacob & Rachel	Genesis 29
Hannah & Samuel	1 Samuel 1:19-25
The Prodigal Son	Luke 15:20-32

But the best love story of all is found in John 3:16.
Read it to discover who loves you the most!

SHARE YOUR LOVE...

Make a Valentine's card for the people you love: mother, father, sister, brother, friend, neighbour.

Dear Lord
Thank you for loving me so much that you sent your Son to die for me. Please be with those people who don't feel very much love today. Surround them with the warmth of your loving arms.

To report a vacancy for the next issue of the Record please contact: Deborah Leader
Tel: 1-800-619-7301 x308 Fax: 416.441.2825 E-mail: dleader@presbyterian.ca
All notices of pulpit vacancies will be charged to the congregation: $8 a line, $40 minimum for a one-time insertion or $25 per insertion for four or more insertions.

Ministry Opportunities and Interim Moderators

New Church Development positions available through Canada Ministries; Contact Rev. Gordon Haynes, Associate Secretary; 416-441-1111 extension 258 for more details.

Synod of the Atlantic Provinces

Sunny Corner Pastoral Charge, NB: St. Stephen's, Sunny Corner, St. Paul's, Warwick; Rev. H. Martyn Van Essen, 7 Hierlihy Rd., Tabusintac, NB E9H 1Y5; 506-779-1812; hmvanessen@hotmail.com.

Tatamagouche Pastoral Charge: Sedgwick Memorial, Tatamagouche, St. Matthew's, Wallace and St. John's, Pugwash; Interim-moderator Richard E. Sand, 37 Mountain Rd., New Glasgow, NS B2H 3K7; acersand@ns.sympatico.ca.

Thorburn and Sutherland's River, NS; Union; Interim Moderator Rev. E. M. Iona MacLean, PO Box 1003, Pictou, NS B0K 1H0; ionamac@eastlink.ca.

Woodstock, St. Paul's New Interim Moderator Rev. Robert Adams, 1991 Hwy. 640, Hanwell, NB E3C 1Z5

Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario

Howick, Georgetown; 1/2 time; Rev. Dr. Barry Mack, 496 Birch Ave., Saint-Lambert, QC J4P 2M8; 450-671-1862; standrews@standrews-stlambert.ca.

Inverness, co-operative with the United Church, 3-point charge; a 3/4 time position and knowledge of French would be an asset; Rev. J. B. Forsyth, 585 Principale sud, Waterville, QC J0B 3H0; 819-837-1475; jbfor@netrevolution.com.

Montreal, Chinese; Rev. J.S.S. Armour, 101 Creswell Dr., Beaconsfield, QC H9W 1E1; 514-426-4688; jss@magma.ca.

Montreal, Taiwanese Robert Campbell Memorial; Rev. Dr. Bill Klempa, 155 Lac Louisa Rd. N., Wentworth, QC J8H 3W8; 450-533-5321; wklemp@po-box.mcgill.ca.

Montreal, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Pierrefonds; Dr. J. Vissers, 3495 University St., Montreal, QC H3A 2A8; 514-288-5256 extension 201; jvissers@presbyteriancollege.ca.

Ottawa, St. Giles; Rev. Andrew Johnston, Interim Moderator; St. Andrew's, 82 Kent St., Ottawa, ON K1P 5N9; 613-232-9042; aj@standrewsottawa.ca.

Pincourt, QC, Ile Perrot; David Morris, Convener, Search Committee, 242 Fifth Ave., Pincourt, QC J7V 5L3; 514-453-4378; dafydd.rich@sympatico.ca.

Vankleek Hill, Knox; Hawkesbury, St. Paul's; Rev. Ian MacMillan, RR 2, Cornwall, ON K6H 5R6; 613-931-2545; a3100@glen-net.ca.

Synod of Toronto and Kingston

Beeton, St Andrew's; Rev. Jim Young, PO Box 312, Sutton, ON L0E 1R0; 905-722-3544; standrew@ils.net.

Belleville, St. Columba; Rev. Katherine McCloskey, PO Box 118, Stirling, ON K0K 3E0; 613-395-5006; katherinejonah@hotmail.com.

Gananoque, St. Andrew's; The Rev. Lincoln Bryant, Interim Moderator; 130 Clergy St. E., Kingston, ON K7K 3S3; 613-546-6316; servant@kos.net.

Georgetown, Knox and Limehouse, Limehouse; Interim Moderator The Rev. Wes Denyer, 44 Church St. E., Brampton, ON L6V 1G3; 905-451-1723; wesdenyer@rogers.com.

Kitchener, St. Andrew's; Rev. Dr. Aubrey Botha, 7 Queens Square, Cambridge, ON N1S 1H4; 519-623-1080; aubreycentral@bellnet.ca.

Milton, Knox; Rev. Harry Klassen, 3065 Cawthra Rd., Mississauga, ON L5A 2X4; dixiepc@bellnet.ca.

Stayner, Jubilee; Sunnidale Corners, Zion; Rev. Keith Boyer; 27 Laurie Cres., Barrie, ON L4M 6C7; 705-735-9211; keb-cvb@sympatico.ca.

Thornhill, Thornhill Presbyterian; Rev. Barry Van Dusen, PO Box 264, Nobleton, ON L0G 1N0; 905-859-0843; barry.peggy.vandusen@sympatico.ca.



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For further information, contact the Interim Moderator:

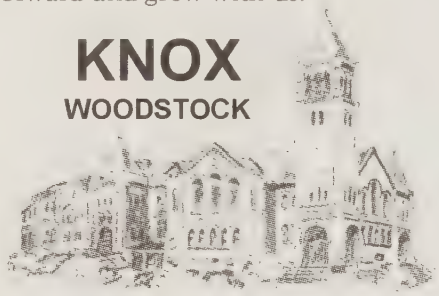
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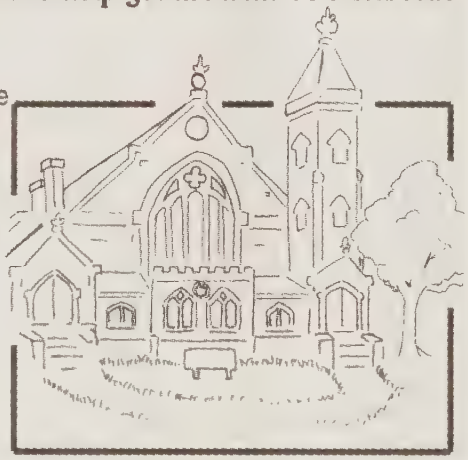


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Toronto, Bridlewood; Rev. Graeme Illman, 765 Myrtle Rd. W., Ashburn, ON L0B 1A0; 905-655-8509; InterimModerator@bridlewoodpc.ca.

Toronto, Patterson; Rev. Zoltan Vass, 439 Vaughan Rd, Toronto, ON M6C 2P1; 416-656-1342

Toronto, St. Andrew's, Humber Heights; Rev. Garth Wilson, 155 Wychwood Ave., Toronto, ON M6C 2T1.

Uxbridge, St. Andrew's-Chalmers; Rev. Duncan Cameron; 115 St. Andrews Rd, Scarborough, ON M1P 4N2; 416-438-4370; scarboroughpc@allstream.net.

Warkworth, St. Andrew's; Hastings, St. Andrew's; Rev. Rylan Montgomery, PO Box 328, Colborne, ON K0K 1S0; 613-475-4675; rylan.montgomery@gmail.ca.

Waterloo, Waterloo North; Rev. Calvin Brown; 5 Linda Dr., Cambridge, ON N3C 3W5; 519-651-2232; cbbrown@rogers.com.

West Hill, Grace; Rev. Issa Saliba, 209 Cochrane St., Whitby, ON L1N 5H9; standrewschurch@bellnet.ca.

Synod of Southwestern Ontario

Brantford, Alexandra; Rev. John Cruickshank, 85 Lot St., Simcoe, ON N3Y 1S4; 519-426-1845; sppc@kwic.com.

Chesley, Geneva Church; Rev. Dr. Alex McCombie, RR 3, Chesley, ON N0G 1L0; Phone: 519-363-5392; Fax: 519-363-0975

Cromarty, Cromarty Presbyterian Church & Hibbert United Church (an ecumenical two-point charge); Interim Moderator Rev. Gwen Brown, PO Box 2418, Exeter, ON N0M 1S7; 519-235-3701; kintail@tcc.on.ca.

Hamilton, Central; Full-time minister; Rev. Harry J. Bradley, Interim Moderator, 165 Charlton Ave. W., Hamilton, ON L8P 2C8; 905-549-8053; hjbradley@mountaincable.net.

Hamilton, Chalmers; Robert Geddes, South Gate Presbyterian Church, 120 Clarendon Ave., Hamilton, ON L9A 3A5; 905-385-7444; bobgeddes@mountaincable.net.

Hamilton, St. John & St. Andrew; Hamilton, St. David's; Rev. Clive W. Simpson, 19 Tisdale St. N., Hamilton, ON L8L 8A7; 905-709-6004; clive.simpson@sympatico.ca.

London, Korean Christian; Mr. Sam Lim, 530 Topping Lane, London, ON N6J 3M7; Bus: 519-472-0360; Home: 519-681-3828 samlimca@yahoo.ca;

Markdale, Cooke's; Feversham, Burns; Rev. Steve Webb; 136 Henry St., Meaford, ON N4L 1E2; 519-538-5095

Niagara Falls, Drummond Hill Presbyterian Church; Interim Moderator Rev. Dr. Doug Robinson, 24 Clairmont St., Thorold, ON L2V 1R3; 905-227-4844 or 905-227-9450; robinson@vaxxine.com.

Port Elgin, Tolmie Presbyterian Church and Burgoyne, Knox; Rev. Bill Vanderstelt, PO Box 280, Chatsworth, ON N0H 1G0; 519-794-0155; bvanderstelt@hotmail.com.

Sarnia, Paterson Memorial; Interim Minister to begin April 2006; Rev. Terry Samuel, PO Box 587, Bright's Grove, ON N0N 1C0; 519-542-2253; terry.samuel@sympatico.ca.

Tillsonburg, St. Andrew's; Rev. Ferenc Szatmari; 21 Lansdowne Ave, Delhi, ON N4B 3B6; 519-582-2169

Windsor, Chinese Church; Half-time, Cantonese-speaking; Wendy Paterson, 3200 Woodland, Windsor, ON N9E 1Z5; 519-972-3627; paulinmemorial@on.aibn.com.

Windsor, St. Andrew's; Full-time minister; Rev. Scott McAndless, Interim Moderator, c/o Knox Presbyterian Church, 58 Erie St. South, Leamington, ON N8H 3B1; 519-326-4541; scottmcandless@sympatico.ca.

Woodstock, Knox; Full-time Associate Minister; Rev. Mark Gaskin, 97 Wellington St., Brantford, ON N3T 2M1; Phone 519-752-4932; Fax 519-752-1846; cpc97@execulink.com.

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Synod of Saskatchewan

Melfort, St. James; Tisdale, St. Andrew's; Rev. George Yando, 314-24th St. W, Prince Albert, SK S6V 4N1; 306-922-2718; geoyando@sasktel.net.

Saskatoon, Circle West; Parkview; Rev. Annabelle Wallace, 436 Spadina Cres. E, Saskatoon, SK S7K 3G6; 306-242-0525; standrews@sasktel.net.

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Lethbridge, AB, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church; Interim Moderator Rev. Frank Breisch, 1818 5th Ave. So, Lethbridge, AB T1J 0W6; andrewst@telusplanet.net.

St. Albert, AB, Braeside Presbyterian Church; Interim Moderator Rev. Harry Currie, 10025 105 St., Edmonton, AB T5J 1C8; hcurrie@incentre.net.

Synod of British Columbia

Victoria, BC, Chinese (bi-lingual, English/Cantonese); Rev. H. McNabb, 760 Latoria Rd., Victoria, BC V9C 3A4; hamcnabb@shaw.ca.

Inductions, Ordinations and Recognitions

November 13, 2005 Induction of Pastor Blaine Dunnett as minister of St. Andrew's, Burnbrae and Campbellford, ON

BACK ISSUES

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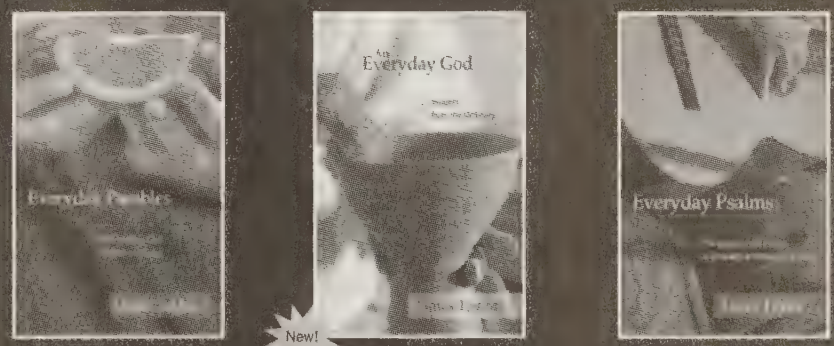
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Jean Morris



Feeding the sheep

Evergreen ministry far exceeds standard Valentine definitions of love

Many years ago I heard somebody say that February was the longest month. By our calendars it's the shortest month, even in the leap year. But it wasn't chronological time they were counting; it was the feeling that February goes on forever. Stuck between all the newness of January and the possibility of the coming of spring in March, February is caught between what has been and what might be. Stuck in between can feel like a long, lonely place.

Whether it seems the longest or is, in fact, the shortest, February is the month when we celebrate love. So, it isn't surprising that the *Record* has chosen love as the theme for this issue. Valentines and cupids take over the malls and card companies thrive as we seek to find ways to express our love for one another. In exploring one of my moderatorial themes, I found an expression of love that far exceeds anything you can put in an envelope or even seal with a kiss.

In my quest to explore non-parish based ministries within The Presbyterian Church, I went to Yonge Street Mission's Evergreen Centre for Street Youth in downtown Toronto. I spent an eye-opening day in this amazing place that exudes love in action.

Evergreen Centre for Street Youth is designed to serve youth, ages 16-24. Approximately 200 youth come to Evergreen daily to participate in a number of services offered there. Youth, who live on or near the street, drop in to Evergreen for meals, a shower, clean clothing, shoes and workshops that range from creative writing and art to health education. Young men and women stop in to see one of the medical, dental, chiropractic and optometry professionals who volunteer there, or to meet with staff in the Employment Resource Centre, or to talk with someone about possible housing options. They also come there to meet and to have a time of recreation among supportive friends.

Rev. Karen Bach is the director of Evergreen. A minister, Karen provides direction for staff and works with colleagues throughout the Yonge Street Mission in designing a vision for ministry with people living in poverty in Toronto. Karen introduced me to Evergreen as we spent the day meeting with staff and clients. I was touched by the strong sense of community and of commitment to one another that I felt throughout my time there.

Evergreen is a place where love is given and received in tangible ways. Many of the women and men who go to Evergreen find themselves in situations that are in between what has been and what might be. Most of the youth are estranged from their families and face dangerous situations on the street. Evergreen offers a peaceful and hopeful place to find encouragement and help in moving beyond the streets.

Evergreen is a non-parish based ministry. It is the church in the world, as the ministry of Christ is lived out, in word and deed. The Presbyterian Church is present in this ministry through Karen Bach, the congregations and volunteers who participate in that ministry, and undoubtedly, some of the thousands of youth that go to Evergreen every year are Presbyterians too.

Jesus said to Peter, "Do you love me?"

"Then feed my lambs, tend my sheep, feed my sheep."



PETER EMMERSON PHOTOGRAPHY

Evergreen offers a peaceful and hopeful place to find encouragement and help in moving beyond the streets

MODERATOR'S ITINERARY

February

2, 3	Church Leaders Event, CCC
5	Glenview, Toronto
5	Evangel Hall, Toronto
19	Rocky Mountain House, Alta.
26	St. Andrew's, Calgary



Visit www.paintinggallery.net to view more work by the artist.

Report From A Leaky Boat, by Maria Gabankova

The artist has placed herself in the middle of this leaky boat. "There is an underlying questioning and examining of my own life and the life of my close friends and the direction of our journey," she says. Inspired, in part, by Ship of Fools by Hieronymus Bosch, the painting is filled with many biblical allusions. Note the Alpha and Omega on the sails. On the piece of paper in the bottom right hand corner are two quotations from the Book of Revelation and Leonard Cohen's song Everybody Knows. Revelation: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away."

Cohen: "Everybody knows that the boat is leaking; Everybody knows that the captain lied; Everybody got this broken feeling; Like their father or their dog just died."

This painting was part of a show at the Toronto School of Theology in November, 2005.

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A young girl holds a child in a tent city housing earthquake survivors supported by Action by Churches Together (ACT). With support from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) PWS&D is helping ACT provide winterized tents, shelter kits, blankets, heaters, winter clothing, food packages, housing reconstruction kits, medical services, and water and sanitation programs in difficult to reach earthquake affected communities in Pakistan and Indian-administered Kashmir. Photo: Paul Jeffrey, ACT

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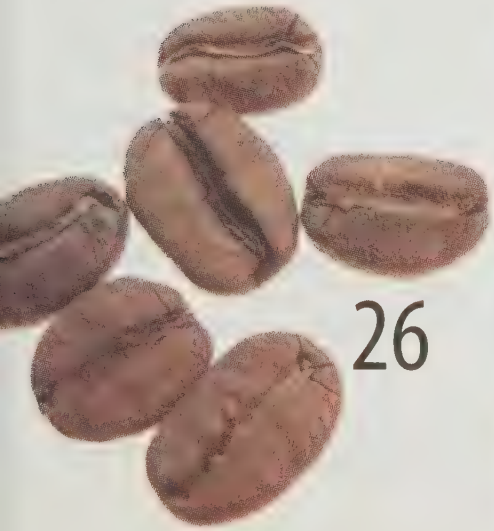
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David Harris



Cool heads needed for green debates

In the first creation story in Genesis, God puts responsibility for creation in the hands of humans, the creatures fashioned in the divine image. It is an awesome responsibility and one that we haven't always done well. • Over the next 50 years Canada is set to become one of world's largest exporters of crude, the Alberta tar sands being the second-largest known oil reserves on the planet. Western oil is Canada's pension-plan portfolio. There's just one problem: global warming.

Ignoring the problem of impurities, burning oil or gas produces heat, carbon dioxide and water. Carbon dioxide is a crucial component of the atmosphere, but too much of a good thing causes overheating. Excess CO_2 wraps the Earth like a duvet, trapping the sun's heat.

Emotions also overheat. Either the Earth is warming like a snowball headed for the devil's lair or global warming is a socialist plot. Nothing is served by debates so crudely framed.

Anti-green critics debunk wild assertions as junk science. But that doesn't explain the brown smog ceiling hovering over cities that sends ever more asthmatics reaching for their puffers.

On the other hand, some green initiatives have been shown to consume more energy than the allegedly wasteful or polluting products and practices they are to replace. (Incandescent lightbulbs, for example, have been shown to be cheap, efficient little heaters in cold, dark Canadian winters.)

Anyone still doubting that humans are warming the Earth can only be called stubborn after a short article just a year ago in The Economist. The influential defender of free-market economics reported on a paper presented to the American Association for the Advancement of Science showing that ocean surface temperatures have increased since the 1940s at a rate that cannot be linked to any natural phenomena.

If there is any problem individuals can affect it is the environmental one. As consumers and investors we are ultimately the ones who determine what widgets will be made and how efficient they will be. And if your church parking lot is crowded with SUVs, perhaps there are opportunities for discussion at coffee hour, if not from the pulpit.

With China and India ravenous for energy, not to mention the United States, Canada stands to make billions from its natural resources that will enrich us all—but at what cost?

The debate is just beginning. Will it become more temperate?

Free speech: because one can doesn't mean one should

A Danish newspaper's publication of satirical cartoons of the prophet Mohammed created heated comments and a few fires as Muslims around the world protested, some violently.

The putative reason for publishing the illustrations was itself a protest against the fact a Danish author couldn't find illustrators for a children's book on the life of Mohammed because of a widely held view in Islam that the prophet should not be depicted. The paper subsequently apologized for what was either folly or excruciating naïveté.

Freedom of expression is a foundational principle in Western democracies. It has not always been so and it is constantly under pressure. Under the Fundamental Freedoms section of the Canadian Charter, 2b refers to "freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication," but it doesn't prevent hate and libel laws circumscribing that freedom.

The violent reaction was absolutely wrong but the repeated publication of the drawings in other newspapers in reaction was still offensive.

One Canadian Muslim group spoke out quickly. Tarek Fatah, a director of the Muslim Canadian Congress, wrote that the "Prophet Mohammed endured insults and ridicule on a daily basis. … Tradition has it that he would … offer a prayer of forgiveness to those who showed contempt for him.

"The Muslim Canadian Congress strongly believes that as reprehensible as the cartoons were, the issuing of death threats and asking for the killing of journalists and cartoonists, must be condemned with vigour, as it is contrary, not only to the letter and spirit of Islam, but also offensive to the civic society we have chosen as our home."

Well-spoken words for all to hear.

David Harris

Go with the plan

It is appropriate for the *Record* to solicit charitable donations to supplement its primary income sources, subscription and advertising revenues. But, such an appeal fails to address the root cause of the financial problem—the *Record's* low and declining subscriber base.

As stated in your report to General Assembly last June, subscriptions have declined by 31 per cent since 1994 with demographics cited as a key factor in that decline. However, I believe the issue is a deeper one. I am appalled to learn that nearly 60 per cent of our congregations do not belong to the Every Home Plan and that barely four out of every 10 households receive the *Record*. It is clear that far too many of our congregations are providing inadequate support to our national church magazine.

I was raised in a home where the *Record* was always in view and in a congregation that was part of the Every Home Plan for as long as I can recall. I am now part of a congregation that is not on the Every Home Plan, but I will do my best as a member of session to effect change in that status. Furthermore, I challenge other elders in similar circumstances to carry this issue forward to their sessions.

Yes, there could be a modest net cost to congregations of joining the Every Home Plan, but I find it difficult to believe that most members, on receiving the *Record*, would not gladly stuff $15 in a contribution envelope to offset the annual cost to their church of taking the bold and enlightened initiative of providing its membership with our historic magazine at the best available price through the Every Home Plan. Undoubtedly, a strong subscriber base must be the backbone of a sustainable publication. As the old adage goes, use it or lose it!

Edward H. Stewart
Kincardine, Ont.

Steady state economics—a primer

Re Andrew Faiz's article on moral choices (January)

Shopping is an ambiguous activity. I can be detached about the subject because I have achieved the biblically approved three score years and ten. I don't need anything except food, drink and replacements. People with growing children cannot be quite so laid back. Still most of us would agree we have too much stuff and buying more stuff simply puts more wear and tear on the planet.

But doesn't buying keep the economy going? Certainly that is the orthodox view. But, there is an alternative, eccentric position called steady-state economics. Orthodox economic theory assumes the planet is an inexhaustible supply of resources and an unfillable dump. We can go on getting, spending and wasting as long as we like and measure our prosperity in never-ending economic growth.

Steady-state people say the planet is not so bountiful. The less we demand of it the better. In their ideal world, people work less but still have enough to live on because they need less. Some people need more than they have now, but the rest of us would live on what we have, or in some cases a good deal less. Shopping would become a necessity, like going to the dentist and people in the Caribbean could have their beaches pretty well to themselves. On the other hand we would have a great deal more leisure time. We would become time-rich and goods-poor, rather than the other way around.

In Isaiah 44 the prophet mocked the man who got a tree, used part of it to warm his house, part of it to cook his supper and part of it to make an idol, a piece of wood he treated as a god. We don't make idols the way the Babylonians did, but we do take things too seriously. Cars and houses cease to be tools and become means of self-expression; and the bigger the better.

With a little thought we could get by

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with less. Two of my students got married shortly after graduation; they told me they didn't want anything, even though a starting minister's salary is not exactly a princely sum. So I wrote them a poem. We would all be better off if we defined ourselves by what we do without, rather than what we have.

The primary moral choice in shopping is whether to shop at all.

Geoff Johnston
Dunnville, Ont.

That kid was Jesus

I am appalled by Andrew Faiz's December article. He refers to the birth of Jesus as "that kid that was born in that barn." How insulting and degrading can you get?

Yes, Christmas has become too materialistic to too many people. What are you doing to share the real meaning of Christmas? Do you really believe that the number of people shopping for gifts means those people do not know the real meaning of Christmas?

Christmas is giving. Christmas is love. God, with His wonderful love for His people, gave us the greatest gift possible, His only Son, Jesus. Because of God's gifts to us I take great pleasure in giving gifts to my family and loved ones. And I take great pleasure in celebrating the birthday of Jesus, our Lord and Saviour. He brought love to the world and the glory of God. The old familiar carols are wonderful. Jesus is the light of the world. And all the Christmas lights are beautiful to see. And at no other time are there more opportunities to tell people the real meaning of Christmas.

Mary Richards
Alliston, Ont.

I was shocked and dismayed at the lack of respect and reverence in that column and in Rev. Marion Schaffer's January letter.

That "kid" was Jesus, the Son of God. His name should be treated with "reverence and Godly fear," (Heb. 12:28), not in a flippant manner.

Norm Paul
Whitby, Ont.

Just wanted to let you know how much I appreciate that column. I couldn't agree more on the subject. Every year I feel more disturbed by Christmas and everything that goes with it.

Maybe Christmas '06 will be better!

Judy McBride
Waterloo, Ont.

Rev. Marion Schaffer responds:
My first reaction was despair (only briefly) that Mr. Faiz's words were so misunderstood. But now I feel good about the fact that he has stirred up some reaction and concern.

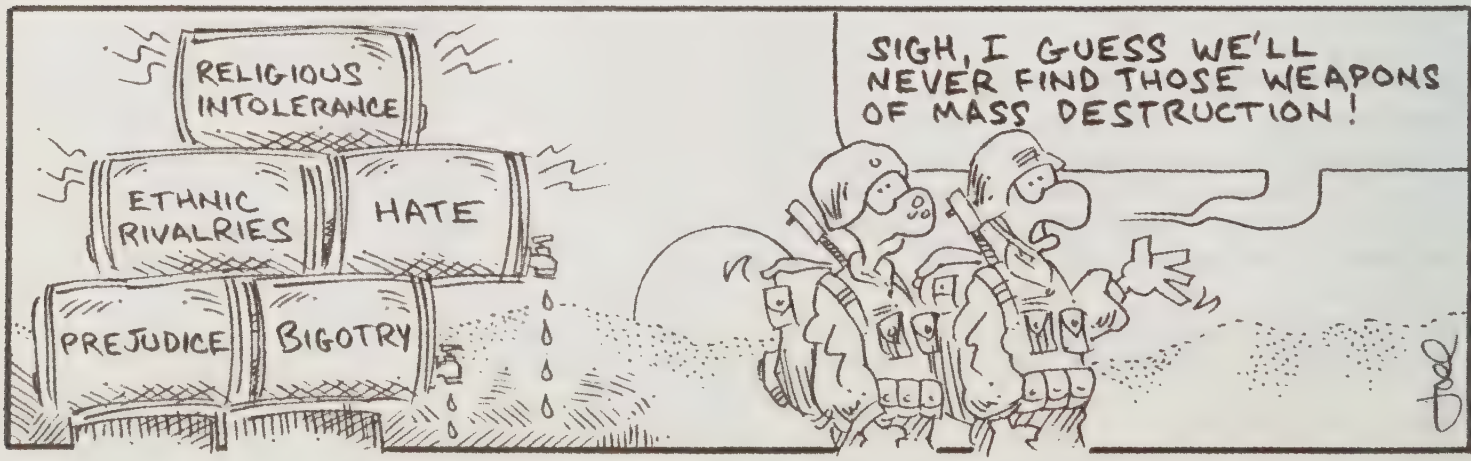
Isn't it ironic that Faiz (and I, since I responded positively to his statement about "that kid ... in that barn") are accused of being disrespectful! In fact, what we are crying out for is a return to what we were given in the beginning: Emmanuel = God with us.

Faiz was asking us to strip away all the hoopla we have created and get back to Christ. By using the words "that kid that was born in that barn" he reminds us that God came into the world the same way we did, journeyed here as we do; he was fully divine but ... fully human.

More than mere reason

I was interested in the different reviews (December) of C.S. Lewis's *Mere Christianity* and agree with most of them. However, I disagree with Harris Athanasiadis' description of Lewis as a leftist rationalist. Politically, in addition to his socially conservative views on women and homosexuality, which were conventional for the time, Lewis was highly critical of the post-war socialist government of Clement Atlee. This becomes clear from reading his collected letters, which for anyone willing to plough through the 2,000 pages that have been published so far (up to the year 1949) make fascinating and rewarding reading. However, it is with the notion that Lewis approached Christianity primarily from a rationalist perspective that I would take issue. As one of the most distinguished literary critics of his day he was certainly an academic, and in today's climate of anti-intellectualism this may be enough to diminish his stature among contemporary post-modernists. No question he belonged to the earlier modernist tradition, which, beginning with the 18th-century Enlightenment, acknowledged human reason as an important guide to truth. After all, God endowed us with the ability to think and

Pontius' Puddle



to use our minds in the service of science or the improvement of our world. But Lewis goes far beyond this. He seems to be following the tradition of the greatest philosopher of the Enlightenment, Immanuel Kant, who concluded that reason can conceive the existence of certain transcendental truths which are simply beyond reason's reach. Didn't Paul say more or less the same thing when he spoke of seeing through a glass darkly?

C.S. Lewis was one of the greatest writers of popular Christian theology and apologetics. Today, only Philip Yancey comes close. I call him popular to distinguish him from those theological heavyweights, quoted by many and read by few. Lewis set out to bring the essential truth of Christianity to ordinary people, though he did expect them to think a little in the process. He certainly used his own formidable powers of reasoning—especially logic—in support of the truth. Yet, the truth itself comes not from logic alone but from faith, honesty and good instincts. To understand this connection we need look no further than the superb screen version of the Chronicles of Narnia, whose scriptwriters very wisely include the words of the professor (who else?) which are the nub of Lewis's rationalist proof that Christ was who he said he was. When the children doubt Lucy's claim that she has seen Narnia, the professor tells them to use logic and adds: "There are only three possibilities. Either your sister is telling lies, or she is mad, or she is telling the truth. You know she doesn't tell lies and it is obvious she is not mad. For the moment then and unless any further evidence turns up, we must assume that she is telling the truth." It would be impossible for the children to accept that logic without faith in their sister.

There's a lot more to Lewis's rationalism than mere reason.

Norman Diffey
Windsor, Ont.

Let God spend the money

When I saw the title of the January article—Is Christ Your Financial Advisor?—I expected a lot more than what I got.

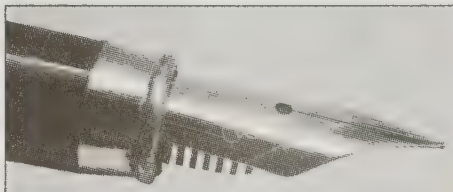
How can you even use this title and then never—not even once—refer to Christ in the seven pages of argument! Perhaps it is because Christ would wonder why, of all organizations in the world, the church—His church—is hoarding money and concerned with investing for future use. I can find nowhere in the scriptures that Christ recommended that kind of action. As a matter of fact, his advice was to "consider the lilies of the field" that did not toil or work. He sent the apostles out with specific instructions to take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bag, no bread, no copper in their money belts.

As Christians, we are to be followers of Christ and yet we hoard and worry about the future when people are starving and hurting today. In the same issue there are articles about millions of Malawians starving, about people dying from AIDS, about social injustice. A little boy gave up his lunch and Jesus fed thousands of people with it. Can you even imagine what good God could do with all of the money retained by the Christian denominations of the world? God doesn't need our money—but we need to allow Him to use it.

Wendy Rotermann
Kitchener, Ont.

Correction

In the January letters Ian Dudgeon wrote of a phone call his congregation made to Richard Schwartz in Nepal. That congregation was Knox's Galt, Cambridge, Ont.



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Think of it as the Canada Youth 2006 pyramid. The Youth Group at St. Andrew's, Saskatoon practices their grand finale: The Most Coordinated People in the World, which was presented at a coffee house, complete with music, poetry, skits, fair trade coffee (of course) and home baking. The generous donations that were elicited will help make this coordinated group part of the nearly 1,000 Canadian Presbyterians at the youth fest, held this year in St. Catharines in July. Canada Youth is bigger than General Assembly; and, if this photo is any evidence, way more fun.



"Proud and brave oh our fathers gave. For the right to think as we do. And in freedoms name we would stand again. Once more o'Scotland forever." St. Andrew's day and the first Sunday in Advent coincided last November, which provided perfect opportunity for St. Andrew's, Quebec to celebrate the theological underpinning of the church's Scottish heritage. From left, celebrating the more cultural aspects of their heritage are Rev. Dr. Stephen Hayes, chaplain of the 78th Fraser Highlanders, St. Andrew's Garrison, Alain Meirhaeghe, piper, and Major Guy Morisset, commanding officer of the 78th Fraser Highlanders.

Fifty-one years ago Jack McIlvenny (in wheelchair) was a member of the liberating Canadian Forces in the Netherlands. This long time member of Knox, Guelph, Ont., returned to the town of Wageningen last May to celebrate the half century anniversary.



HAD CAKE LATELY? Share your celebrations with the rest of the church. Send your stories to PnP@presbyterianrecord.ca along with your digital photographs, 300 dpi minimum, high quality JPEGs. Or mail the photographs to: The Record, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, M3C 1J7.

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For more People & Places submissions please visit our website: www.presbyterianrecord.ca



While serving spaghetti, this youth group you see, managed to raise funds, for PWS&D. Oh, and also for the building fund at their home church, St. David's, Halifax. The culinary fundraisers are: Charlotte Taper, Laura Shepherd, Alex Shepherd, Neil Macdonald, Andrew Lappin, Kelsey Webb, Alissa Taper, Maggie Campbell, Ian Palmeter and Bridget Lappin.



It seems these Presbyterians in Training (or the PIT Crew at Jubilee, Stayner, Ont.) could actually teach the rest of us a thing or two about faith and mission. After making the salads and cakes they barbequed hotdogs outdoors in the snow. An appropriately appreciative congregation rewarded them with generous donations and the young people purchased one cow, two goats and eight piglets through a World Vision program. These able Presbyterians are: Matthew DeGorter, Heather Wallace, Alex Greig, Trent Kneeshaw and Evan Burkholder.



Whatever Knox, Easthope, Ont., has in their water, they should bottle it and donate to other churches. Five young men—James Hart, Aaron Wybrou, David Hart, James Rutherford and Ben Bick—recently proclaimed their faith and joined the church. Seen with them are clerk of session Arthur Horne and Rev. Andrew Fullerton.



"We should do something, it's in our backyard," elder Doug White insisted. And so it began: the sign says it all, two congregations, some land donated by members to grow hay, with the profits sent to Canadian Foodgrains Bank. From left, Don Raymer, CFGB's Atlantic Canada coordinator, White of St. David's, Heather Platt, CFGB's national director of resources and Earl Johnson of St. George's.

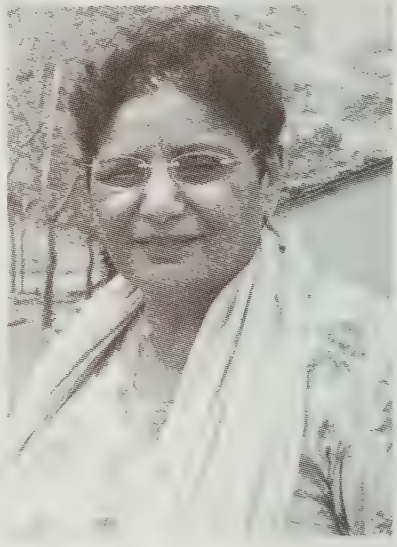
Sharing for mission

CONGREGATIONS GAVE generously to Presbyterians Sharing in 2005, with a total of $8,672,720 received. Presbyterians Sharing is the fund that supports the ministries and mission of the church. As is tradition, a large percentage of the givings for the year is received during the first two weeks of January. This year was no exception, with 21 per cent or about $1.8 million collected by this time.

While the final figure is about $51,000 (0.6 per cent) less than the previous year, it is still encouraging, as congregations also made generous offerings to the many disasters of 2005.

"This money comes from both large and small congregations across Canada who believe in the mission and ministry of our church," said Annemarie Klassen, associate secretary of stewardship and education for mission. "That includes our ministries at 50 Wynford. We have much for which to be thankful." – *AM*

Passionate Johnson recipient



This year's recipient of the Dr. E.H. Johnson Award will be Karuna Roy, coordinator of the HIV/AIDS Program of the Church of North India. The award honours those "on the cutting edge of mission," and will be presented to Roy at a special luncheon during the 2006 General Assembly in St. Catharines, Ont.

Roy's work focuses those infected and affected by the virus, including women, youth, refugees, drug addicts and prison inmates. Of India's one billion people, there are 5.1 million cases of HIV/AIDS, although Roy said tripling the number gives a more accurate picture.

Despite being labelled as shameless for speaking about such things, Roy is committed to the cause. "I'm too attached to this problem," she said, during an interview with the *Record* at last year's assembly where she was an ecumenical visitor. "It used to be a challenge for me, now it's a passion. I'll do this work to my dying day." – *AM*

WCC seeks alternative globalization

A world without poverty is possible

A document from the World Council of Churches entitled AGAPE - A Call To Love And Action, asks churches "to act together for transformation of economic injustice." The document summarizes the results of the work done by the WCC and its ecumenical partners on economic globalization since its eighth assembly in Harare in 1998.

"A world without poverty is not only possible but is in keeping with the grace of God for the world," states the document. This idea played a central role at the ninth assembly of the WCC, held in Porto Alegre, Brazil, from Feb. 14 to 23.

The call, in the form of a prayer, invited assembly participants to recommit themselves to work "for the eradication of poverty and inequality", "for justice in international trade relations" and "for responsible lending, unconditional debt cancellation and the control and regulation of global financial markets."

Preservation of natural resources and bio-diversity, resistance against privatization of public goods and services, promotion of land reforms, advocacy for decent jobs and just wages, and a firm faith stance against hegemonic powers are among the recommitments to which the call is inviting churches and the wider ecumenical movement.

The WCC is a fellowship of 347 churches in more than 120 countries from virtually all Christian traditions.

To read the declaration, see the WCC website—*www.oikoumene.org*

– AM with files from the WCC

Walking for water

KAIROS asks congregations to get involved

The ecumenical justice organization, KAIROS, of which the Presbyterian Church is a member, is urging congregations to get involved in World Water Day activities on March 22. KAIROS developed a how-to kit to help congregations and individuals plan a Walk for Water in the community. It is hoped the walk will draw attention to the need to keep water in public hands, ensuring access to all.

The 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro (the Earth Summit) designated March 22 as a time when nations might bring attention to and implement the UN's recommendations regarding the protection of and access to fresh water.

This year, March 22 is also the last day of the World Water Forum, a gathering of international financial institutions, multinational corporations and governments to solve the world's water dilemma through the privatization of water systems.

The Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace, the Council of Canadians and the Canadian Union of Public Employees are also involved in water day events. Visit the KAIROS website at: *www.kairoscanada.org/e/action/worldWaterDayActionKit.asp* for more information.

PHOTO: GESINE WOLPINGER ACT/CARITAS



Dirage camp near Nyala, Darfur.

Moderator urges continued relief to Darfur

REV. M. JEAN MORRIS, moderator of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, along with 15 other Canadian faith leaders, recently commended the Government of Canada for the significant contributions made to support humanitarian and relief efforts in Darfur, Sudan, and to assist the African Union Mission in Sudan in its efforts to provide security.

Addressed to the prime minister, the letter was issued through the Canadian Council of Churches on Jan. 17, and stated that "people of faith in Canada have worked in solidarity with the people of Sudan for many years, developing long partnerships and collaboration.

"Canadians are looking to our political leaders to continue taking steps, unilaterally, bilaterally and multilaterally, to protect communities under threat, boldly work with others to resolve the conflict, and restore peace and safety to the people of Darfur."

The ecumenical leaders, representing Catholic, Jewish, Protestant, Orthodox, Sikh and Hindu traditions, said, "as the crisis continues into a fourth year, we urge the government to include Darfur at the top of its international policy agenda, and take actions that would be effective in bringing peace and security to the people there."

A follow-up letter will be sent to Canada's new Prime Minister, Stephen Harper.

The crisis has left about one million people homeless since the conflict began in Feb. 2003, with deaths estimated to be anywhere from 50,000 to 100,000 as a result of militia attacks, as well as a lack of food, sanitation and health care in refugee camps. Approximately 130,000 people are living in these camps in neighbouring Chad. – *AM*

Dangerous places of worship

In Pakistan guns and the blasphemy law are used against minorities | BY ANDREW FAIZ

My cousin is a doctor at a Christian Hospital in an ancient city an hour north of Islamabad, Pakistan. On Friday, August 9th, 2002, her mother, my aunt, wasn't feeling well and the two decided not to go to chapel—about a hundred metres from their home. It was a good choice, for them. Three men, dressed ordinarily, talked their way past a guard at the hospital entrance, and then held another guard at gunpoint. They waited until the worshippers were leaving the chapel and tossed live grenades at them. Three nurses were killed; 25 others were injured. One of the attackers killed himself fumbling with a grenade.

In February 1997, a crowd estimated as large as 20,000 tore through Christian villages outside of Lahore, burning homes, churches, property, cars. At the time I had family living in that district. The rampage—known as Shanti Nagar, for the village most affected—seems to have grown out of an earlier arrest.

In January that year, police had raided the home of Raj Masih on information that he was running an alcohol and gambling operation. They found no evidence to support the claim but arrested him nonetheless. Rumours spread in the Christian community that one of the policemen had ripped open Masih's Bible. The local Christians protested. Counter rumours spread that a Christian had torn open a Koran. Then a vigilante mob gathered.

Rumours are sometimes enough in Pakistan. As much as five per cent of Pakistan's 145 million are Christians. (Statistics vary on this point.) Masih is a common name for Christians, being a variation on Messiah, and is often used derisively. This relatively insignificant population (of which I was a member by birth) is besotted by rumours, which are further abetted by the blasphemy law.

Though the charges are rarely supported in higher courts, local mobs burn homes and businesses; family members are beaten or killed

Section 295-C of the Penal Code, added in 1986 by president Zia ul-Haq states in part: "derogatory remarks in respect of the Holy Prophet ... either spoken or written, or by visible representation, or by any imputation, innuendo, or insinuation, directly or indirectly ... shall be punished with death, or imprisonment for life, and shall also be liable to fine." In other words, anybody who blasphemes the Prophet, in any way, can be put to death.

And that is often how it is used: accusations are made, people are arrested. The law has been used spitefully on hundreds of occasions: business deals gone bad, neighbourhood tensions, personal and professional jealousies. The accused, often a Christian, is charged with uttering something against the Prophet, or desecrating the Koran. Though the charges are rarely supported in higher courts, often the damage is well done by then. Local mobs burn homes and businesses; family members are beaten or killed. Just the specter of the accusation is enough to disperse long established families.

One of the earliest stories I heard was of a boy, also named Masih. He was accused of writing something derogatory on a mosque. I am told he now lives in Germany with his father and all charges have been dropped against him. But, along the way an uncle was murdered, the family is separated and permanently scarred.

In another story—these are commonly traded by Pakistani Christians—the prosecuting witness stated he couldn't possibly relate the nature of the crime since he'd then be blaspheming himself. The presiding judge accepted that and the trial continued without due diligence.

Despite myriad appeals to presiding presidents and prime ministers the blasphemy law remains. Pakistan is not a theocracy, but the power of religious institutions is great and politicians do not dare contradictions. Meanwhile, Pakistani Christians live in a constant state of anxiety. Any normal human relationship could disintegrate to a blasphemy accusation; or, they could be arbitrary victims of a Sunday morning bombing.

The Presbyterian College
Montreal
announces the annual
Alison Stewart-Patterson
Entrance Scholarship

for a woman candidate for ordained ministry studying at the College.

(The award will take into account contribution to church life and economic need, as well as academic abilities.)

For information, contact:
Dr. John Vissers, Principal
The Presbyterian College
3495 University Street
Montreal, QC H3A 2A8
(514) 288-5256
info@presbyteriancollege.ca

Russia returns Calvinist books

HUNGARY'S REFORMED CHURCH has welcomed a decision by Russia to return a valuable Calvinist book collection, six decades after it was seized as war booty by the Soviet Red Army.

"We're very happy this collection is returning after so many years, and we hope all the books will be included," said Zoltan Tarr, general secretary of Hungary's Reformed Church, which comprises about a fifth of Hungary's 10 million inhabitants. "It's an important symbolic act, which could help heal the war wounds which are still very real in the life of Europe."

The collection, including Latin, Hungarian and German prayer books, as well as works on medicine, law and history, was placed for safe-keeping during the Second World War in a Budapest bank vault. Later the books were seized and taken to Russia, where they were discovered in Nizhny Novgorod's Regional Scientific Library in 1994. – *ENI*

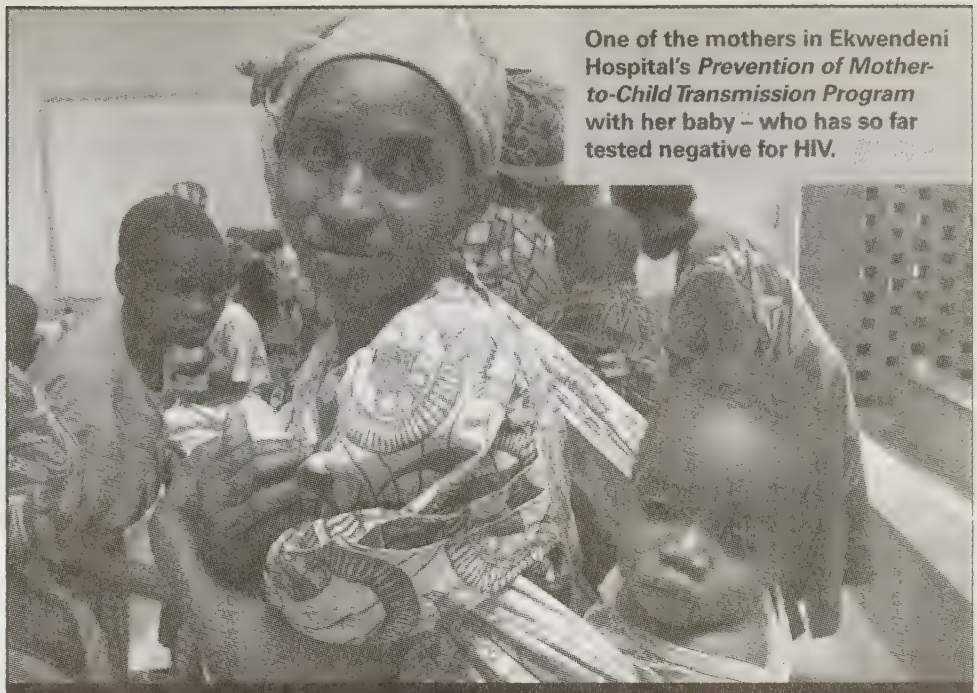
Darfur 'inexcusable,' say Africans

THE ALL AFRICA CONFERENCE of Churches has expressed dire concern over the escalating violence in the Darfur region, west of Sudan, where renewed fighting is forcing aid workers to flee.

"As Africans and Christians, we are appalled by the reports of random, indiscriminate killings, especially since ethnic and religious hatred is reported to be at the root of aggression," said the Bishop Mvume Dandala, the leader of the African church grouping.

Dandala, a Methodist from South Africa, described the continued violence as "inexcusable", while underlining his desire for a peaceful settlement of the devastating conflict.

ACT-Caritas, an alliance of Protestant, Roman Catholic and Christian Orthodox relief agencies across the globe, recently reported that armed militias have driven more than 55,000 people from their homes in South Darfur. – *ENI*



One of the mothers in Ekwendeni Hospital's *Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission Program* with her baby – who has so far tested negative for HIV.

KAREN PLATER, PWS&D

The Gift of Hope

Imagine learning you have tested positive for HIV and you are trying to come to grips with living with this terminal disease. Now imagine that you are pregnant, and learning that you could pass that virus on to your unborn child.

In the midst of the AIDS pandemic which is devastating communities in Malawi, Ekwendeni Hospital's *Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission Program* is a ray of hope. With PWS&D's support, the hospital is helping HIV+ mothers prevent the transmission of HIV to their unborn children. Mothers who test positive receive antiretrovirals just prior to the birth of their babies and their newborns receive antiretrovirals immediately after birth – a proven way to reduce the rates of transmission of HIV from a mother to her child. In addition, the hospital continues to support both mother and child to help them live healthy lives after birth.

Share hope. Support PWS&D.

PWS&D's relief and development programs operate because people and congregations financially support the work. PWS&D receives no funds from *Presbyterians Sharing...*

For more information or to make a donation, write or call:

Presbyterian World Service & Development (PWS&D)

50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7
Tel: (416) 441-1111 or toll-free 1-800-619-7301
E-mail: pwsd@presbyterian.ca Website: www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd

Enclosed is my donation of $ _____ to PWS&D.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Province & Postal Code _____

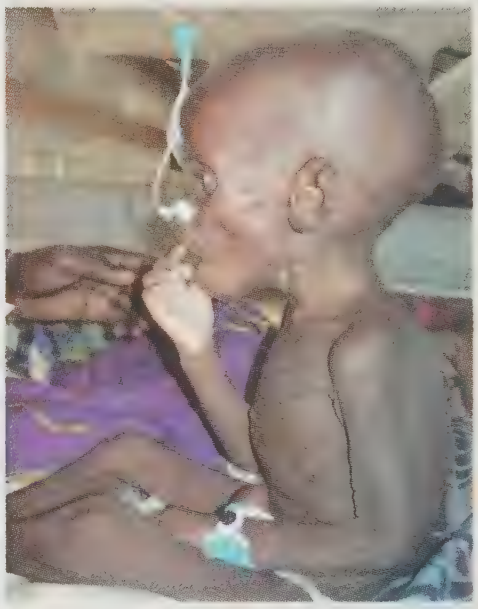
Please make your cheque payable to PWS&D

Dignity in the face of adversity

The continuing famine in Niger is more horrible than can be imagined | BY JANE PHILPOTT



Seeing them on television is one thing, but it is quite another to lift the naked, brown body of a two-year-old who weighs only eight pounds!



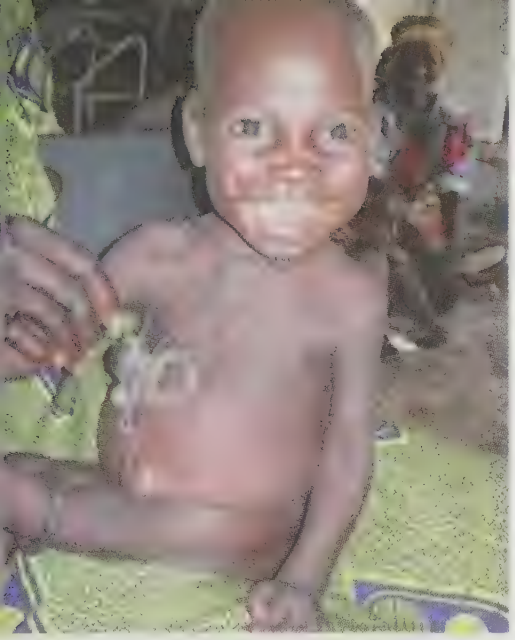
Jane Philpott in Niger working with starved and dehydrated children. Opposite page: The charismatic Ali was amused by the camera flash and responded with a huge smile.

I've worked as a doctor for more than 20 years, including time in Canada and Africa. I recently spent two months in Niger, and I've never felt so surrounded by suffering and death. The worst part about seeing hundreds of critically ill patients every day for weeks is that most of them are less than three years old. They are all victims of severe malnutrition.

I struggle to explain what it is like to care for one precious child after another who is literally skin and bones. Seeing them on television is one thing, but it is quite another to lift the naked, brown body of a two-year-old who weighs only eight pounds! I'd look into the hopeful eyes of this child and imagine what strength of character it takes to fight for life with such few resources. These children and their mothers captured my heart. Rahima was one of the first girls I met. She was so tiny. And she was dreadfully dehydrated from diarrhea. She sat quietly, gazing up at me looking so serene, so wise. It was a very hot day and other kids were crying and fussy. But little Rahima, the picture of peace, taught me about dignity in the face of adversity.

Another child, Ali, is etched in my mind. One morning, after already seeing dozens of ailing, emaciated children, a mother moved to the front of the line. Her baby, Ali, had the most gorgeous, big brown eyes. He was so charming that I had to take his picture. He was amused by the camera flash and responded with the most charismatic smile I've ever seen. It was impossible not to smile back, which only caused him to smile and laugh all the more. Another photo, more giggles. Our private moment of merriment was only a few minutes, but Ali is bonded to my heart. I hope and pray this boy can survive the obstacles that will challenge his young life in Niger. I have to believe God has big plans for him.

But not all my memories are as happy as those surrounding little Ali. Death is omnipresent in Niger, extinguishing young lives. If they are left untreated, more than half of these children with severe malnutrition will die. Even with the excellent medical care of Médecins Sans Frontières, at least two or three young children died almost every day in the therapeutic feeding centres.



I feel numb as I remember Issoufou's death. He and his mother had just arrived and he was brought to me immediately. He was horribly dehydrated from diarrhea and in shock. It was impossible to start an intravenous on him. I knew I had only minutes. His blood flow had almost stopped and I couldn't find a vein. He stopped breathing five minutes after arrival. In an instant, he was gone. It was a very sad moment,

I'd look into the hopeful eyes of this child and imagine what strength of character it takes to fight for life with such few resources

even though I realized his illness was too far advanced before he arrived. It makes me crazy to think this is an everyday experience in Niger. A helpless child doesn't even see his second birthday. Yet it is so common, it barely makes a ripple in the day's activity.

It grieves me deeply that, in 2006, thousands of children will die for lack of food. When will we, the wealthy ones of the world, look beyond ourselves and help end extreme poverty and hunger in the world?

– Jane Philpott is a family physician in Stouffville, Ontario. She returned in November after an eight-week mission with Médecins Sans Frontières in Niger, West Africa. During the current food crisis in Niger, tens of thousands of children are at risk of death.

Eco-friendly churches

A CATHOLIC CHURCH IN TORONTO is slated to become the first Canadian church certified for its eco-friendly design by the Leadership in Energy and Environment Design rating system. LEED was developed by the U.S. Green Building Council, a volunteer organization that promotes high-performance sustainable buildings.

St. Gabriel's broke ground for the new building last May, which is expected to be finished this August. The building will not only beautify the neighbourhood, conserve energy and improve air quality, it will also serve as a living monument to what Father Paul Cusack calls "eco-theology."

"You can't make people well on a sick planet, no matter how sophisticated your technology," said Cusack in a press release. "For people to be healthy, the planet must be healthy. We have tried to embody these teachings in the design of our new church."

The new St. Gabriel's will feature a solar glass wall on the south side that will harness the energy of the winter sun and will connect worshippers to an outdoor garden. Most of the parking will be underground to preserve green space around the building, and a "living wall" will be draped in foliage over which a thin layer of water will constantly flow.

"While reducing energy costs was one of the reasons for building a 'green' church," said Cusack, "our primary motivation was to establish a link between the sacredness of the gathered community of faith and the sacredness of Earth."

The Unitarian Congregation of South Peel in Mississauga, Ont., broke ground last August for their new "green" sanctuary, which is to be completed around the same time this year. Born of an idea that first surfaced at the eco day camp held there in the summer, the project is six years in the making and will use passive solar heating and cool-roof technology to reduce energy use by 60 per cent. The building complex also shares a bio-filter system for waste water, and although located in a busy urban area, the church has its own septic system, sending no sewage to the city. *– AM with files from Iris Ward*

Plans for racial justice week

THE CANADIAN ECUMENICAL ANTI Racism Network has called for a Canadian churches' Racial Justice Week on March 19 – 26. The network is offering a free 37-page kit with worship and sermon-writing ideas, Bible studies and children's resources. It can be downloaded at: www.ccc-cce.ca/english/downloads/God_so_loved.pdf.

St. Andrew's Church
King & Simcoe – Toronto
presents
THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

March 1st
ASH WEDNESDAY
Dr. Cameron Brett
The Mark of the Ashes

March 8th
"THE UNWANTED INVITATION"
Rev. Karen Horst

March 15th
"CONSTANT DEMANDS"
Dr. Bradley McLean

March 22nd
"STANDING WITH OTHERS"
Rev. Daniel Cho

March 29th
"REMOVE THIS CUP"
Rev. Ian McDonald

April 5th
"WASHED ANY FEET LATELY?"
Rev. Ken Heron

* * *

Holy Week Schedule:

Monday, April 10th
Tuesday, April 11th
Wednesday, April 12th
Dr. Brian Irwin

Thursday, April 13th
HOLY COMMUNION
Dr. George Vais

12:00 noon
Organ Recital

12:15 p.m.
Meditation

12:45 p.m.
Sandwiches

Leaders propose new Reformed communion

(ENI)— The leaders of two worldwide Reformed church groupings have proposed the creation of a new global body called the World Reformed Communion to unite the more than 80 million Protestants in their two organizations.

"We … believe that this new, united, Reformed body will be a blessing to the broader ecumenical movement and to the reconciliation of the world," said Rev. Clifton Kirkpatrick, president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), and Rev. Douwe Visser, president of the Reformed Ecumenical Council (REC), in a joint statement.

Geneva-based WARC has 75 million members in 218 churches in 107 countries, including The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Grand Rapids, Michigan-headquartered REC is in 25 countries with 12 million members belonging to 40 churches.

Europeans see role for ecumenism

(ENI) — Pope Benedict has given his support to a gathering of Europe's main Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches in 2007 saying he hoped it would help promote awareness of Europe's spiritual roots.

"Europe needs to rediscover its Christian roots, making room for ethical values that are part of its rich and well-established spiritual heritage," the pope told church leaders from different denominations attending the opening event in Rome for the Third European Ecumenical Assembly which will culminate in Romania in Sept. 2007.

Delegates to the Rome assembly had joined the pope the day before for prayers to mark the end of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

And German Lutheran Bishop Margot Kaessmann, in her keynote speech, warned that attempts by churches to differentiate themselves from one another weakened their common witness in European society.

"In an age when so many religious currents are flowing into Europe, from Islam to Buddhism, from the esoteric to patchwork religion, Christians' common witness to their faith needs all the more to be recognisable," said Kaessmann.

She noted that, "Particularly in facing the great ethical challenges of our time, we should seek common positions "highlighting issues such as biotechnology, assisted suicide, energy policy, and refugees."

Pope endorses love's many splendours

(ENI) — "Love is a single reality with different dimensions", Pope Benedict XVI stated in his first encyclical, Deus Caritas Est (God Is Love), issued in January. "Yet when the two dimensions are totally cut off from one another, the result is a caricature or at least an impoverished form of love."

Benedict added: "True, eros tends to rise in ecstasy towards the Divine, to lead us beyond ourselves; yet for this very reason it calls for a path of ascent, renunciation, purification and healing."

Some commentators have seen in the encyclical an attempt to portray a softer, gentler papacy and a few have mused whether permission for Western Catholic priests to marry, may be next. (Eastern Rite priests have long been permitted to marry.)

Benedict went on to say that while the church cannot impose itself on the state, it must not remain on the sidelines in the fight for justice.

Rehabilitating Judas

(ENI) — A Roman Catholic writer close to both the current and the previous popes argues that the rehabilitation of Judas Iscariot would "resolve the problem of an apparent lack of mercy by Jesus towards one of his closest collaborators."

Vittorio Messori said that according to one Christian tradition, Judas was forgiven by Jesus and ordered to purify himself with "spiritual exercises" in the desert.

According to an article in *The Times*, "The Judas myth helped to shape 2,000 years of anti-Semitism. It remains illegal to name a child Judas in Germany."

Dummies for Jesus

(ENI) — With titles like *Spirituality For Dummies* and *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Jesus*, user-friendly books on sacred texts, major religions, meditation and figures such as Jesus, the Buddha and Pope John Paul II are proving popular in the United States.

"Many people today see spirituality as a tool to be understood and used in life," said Mary Kupiec Cayton, professor of history and American studies at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. "These guides can help bring people up to speed on subjects where they have little prior knowledge. They also suggest that there is a market for accessible information dealing with religion and spirituality."

Cautioning Hamas

(ENI) — Leaders of the major Christian churches in the Holy Land have given their support to the results of the Palestinian elections in which Hamas won legislature seats by a landslide.

Hamas provides most social services in Gaza, but it also has a violent terrorist wing and its charter calls for Israel's destruction and the establishment of an Islamic state in all of Israel and the Palestinian territories.

The Christian leaders urged the Islamic group to use the teachings of Jesus as a guide when it takes over the reins of the Palestinian Authority.

They urged Palestinians, to "not let your hearts be troubled or afraid" and to "be strong and stand firm".

Talk by some Hamas leaders of imposing Islamic law (sharia) has heightened concerns. But others have indicated the movement might moderate its positions for the time being as it seeks to set up a government that will not alienate Palestinians who are more liberal or Western nations, which provide the Palestinian Authority with substantial aid.

Some Hamas officials said they hoped to introduce more Islamic laws and customs in the legislature but would not force people to obey them and would therefore not prevent men and women from mixing or ban alcohol.

Sharing our environment

Neither condescending pity nor contemptuous superiority will save lives

BY ANDREW FAIZ

Over the past five years, four young men of my acquaintance have been murdered. They were all black, not yet 25 years of age. And they were all shot to death over what the press commonly calls gang violence.

For my National Film Board of Canada documentary on Flemingdon Park, the neighbourhood where I grew up, I worked with some of these young men on a music video built around the old rah-rah-rule-Britannia anthem The Maple Leaf Forever. Robbie D. wrote a counter rap anthem based on the original lyrics. It was very smart.

One evening we were in a brick walled room inside a community centre: the film crew along with Robbie D. and about two dozen of his friends, singing and filming his version of the old Canadian anthem. The friends comprised a loose collective of artists called Guilty Crimes, based in Flemingdon.

Guilty Crimes is the sort of thing that the press calls a gang; but to me they were amongst the most talented group of young men I have ever met. They were professional, never letting their energy flag. That evening is a highlight for me, and I promised myself I would find more work for these men. I've yet to keep that promise.

I am under no illusions as to the reality of these men's lives. By the time they hit 20 they have a child or two, likely from different mothers. The moms and dads do not live under the same roof; each live with their own parents. The economy of social housing is dependent as much on the number of people living in the home as their need. Most of these men deal drugs on the side, earning perhaps a few thousand dollars a month. They often pour their earnings into production time for their music. Each of them has a collection of songs. They form artistic collectives to promote themselves.

And they don't expect to live to be 30, sadly a fact true amongst their peers. Tobi Johnson was in this collective. He had the voice of an angel. In one of the last songs he recorded, with Robbie D., before he was murdered in London, Ont., he sings, "It's my environment that makes me so violent." He closes by asking, "Father forgive me."

When I met him he wasn't so violent: just a funny guy who made you believe in God as he opened his mouth to sing.

These young men are too smart to fall for a social worker's self-righteousness and too hard-bitten to embrace any quick fixes; but, they also seek, in their hearts, to embrace our environment

He was black, from a poor, social assistance-dependent family, Jamaican by heritage, Canadian by birth. He grew up in a neighbourhood filled with social programs. None touched him. In fact, much of Canada, its values, its virtues, failed to touch him. He grew up in an environment that made him die violently.

It's not poverty, race, culture, hip-hop or rap, music videos, drugs, immigration policies or any one of the zillion other excuses put up by pundits and politicians. Millions of people share in these dynamics but do not die by hand guns on city streets.

It is their environment which makes their lives so violent. Just as our environment—safe, middle class, built on values, which aren't specifically cultural or religious in their roots, but are shared none the less—makes us so silent.

We cannot continue to wash our hands with money. Social programs—our much-vaunted social policies—have failed these (and many, many other) young people. Our liberal ideals have denigrated into a Pilate-like distancing: as long as we pay out, we don't have to care. Not really. Cynical politicians come through Flemingdon regularly, occasionally with a Toronto Raptor, and get their photos taken with young black youth.

Toba Chung (as Tobi was also known) made no excuses for himself—he asked for forgiveness. My dear friend Garfield was murdered nearly two decades ago with a baseball bat. It was a death he predicted for himself, because, as he often told me, he recognized his own sin. He knew the life he had chosen, he knew how wrong it was, and he too begged his Father for forgiveness.

These young men are too smart to fall for a social worker's self-righteousness and too hard-bitten to embrace any quick fixes. But they also seek, in their hearts, to embrace our environment. They want safe bourgeois lives but don't know how to achieve them. This is how we have to get our hands dirty—not with the condescending pity of liberal ideology, or the contemptuous superiority of conservatism, but with the open heart of our faith. We have to share our environment with them.

And I have to keep my promise.

Andrew Faiz is a writer, producer and filmmaker. He is also managing editor of the *Record*. You can reach him at mngeditor@presbyterianrecord.ca.

We've got His whole world in our hands

Environmental stewardship is a God-given duty. Last year, General Assembly endorsed Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth, a document from the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, and endorsed a clean water initiative of KAIROS (Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives) and the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace.

Behind the talk, however, there must be action. Behind the large declaratio made by international and national organizations, there must be local initiativ

We hear the call of the Earth; we understand we are stewards of God's wor This month, the *Record* explores ways we can live lightly on Earth.

Respecting one another and the Earth

Full-time environmentalist brings a holistic approach to everything she does

BY AMY MACLACHLAN

IT WAS IN JAPAN where she grew up that Janette McIntosh first understood the connection between the environment and humanity. In the concrete jungle of Osaka, where the smell of burning rubber wafted from working class homes, McIntosh saw her neighbours struggling to make ends meet while their health deteriorated, the result of small manufacturing shops in their basements. She also remembers the fresh smell of sushi and the glorious month each summer when her family—three siblings and missionary parents Rev. Jack and Beth McIntosh—would escape to Lake Nojiri for vacation. "I realized there's a beautiful world out there of God's creation and wonder to be thankful for."

Thanks in part to her parents' social justice influence, this mother of two and elder at West Point Grey, Vancouver, has committed her life to studying how the well-being of the planet and its people intersect and affect each other. "Solely focusing on the environment isn't good enough," McIntosh told the *Record*. "It's broader than that. The environment encompasses the social dimension and the human aspects of life."

She speaks instead of sustainability; how the environment sustains human life and how humans can help sustain the Earth. As a member of Canada World Youth back in 1982, McIntosh travelled to Indonesia, where she saw how the environment—poor sanitation and dirty water—affected the health of the people who lived there (and how the lack of awareness and education among locals contributed to the problem). "There was a significant shift in me and in looking at the ways to work in the preventative health care field."

After completing a degree in environmental health at Ryerson University, she became a public health inspector and then



earned her masters in community health and epidemiology. McIntosh included courses on social and environmental issues as determinants of health, and how people, places and time are all connected. "It furthered my quest of finding out why people get sick."

She was the coordinator of a taskforce at the University of British Columbia that studied the resources needed to sustain life. Transportation, land use and energy consumption were all considered. It was posited that two more planets would be needed to sustain the lifestyle most Canadians enjoyed.

Her passion continued even as a homemaker. "I put my heart into my home and family life and I put my expertise and interests into their communities. I bring broader social issues into the discussion and offer what I can to support initiatives the teachers take around environmental topics."

Along with encouraging her son's school to concentrate on reducing, reusing, not just recycling, she also teaches a program called Roots of Empathy, where school children are taught social and empathy skills in the hope it will lead to respect for one another—and the Earth. "There is a connection in how we relate with the environment and with other human be-

Greening your congregation

A few ways a congregation can more Earth-friendly.

- develop a mission statement together
- hold an Earth Day service
- introduce ecology to worship through hymns, prayers, scripture and bulletins
- undertake a formal environmental audit
- reduce energy by using energy-efficient light bulbs, turning off lights and turning down thermostats
- transportation accounts for 25 per cent of Canada's greenhouse-gas emissions: walk, bike, take a bus to church
- develop environmental sustainability criteria for purchasing supplies (e.g., consider locally available resources or products rather than imports)
- reduce consumption and waste, re-use as often as possible and recycle more than just paper. For example, wash dishes instead of using disposable cups for coffee and tea
- stop using pesticides and herbicides on church lawns
- convert open-space lawns to community gardens
- use non-chlorinated bleaches like Borax for difficult cleaning
- try David Suzuki's Nature Challenge (www.davidsuzuki.org/WOL/Challenge) or the One Tonne Challenge (www.climatechange.gc.ca)

– Janette McIntosh



Students and Lia Dodge, education assistant, have embraced the Litterless Lunch program at Bayview School, Vancouver.

ings," said McIntosh. "If you have a natural care for people, why wouldn't that connect with a concern for the environment, and vice versa?"

She is encouraged that the Presbyterian Church has made statements in the past concerning stewardship of the Earth (General Assembly passed a mission statement in 1995 "to use God's gifts wisely and fairly for the good of all"), but is dismayed that she hasn't heard much about it from a practical standpoint.

Still, her congregation returned to this statement and created its own mission statement on greening. They hold an annual worship service focusing on the environment, and hymns and prayers with an emphasis on creation and stewardship are used regularly. The hydro company has even been invited to conduct an energy and cost analysis, to let them know where they can save both. Eventually, she hopes all the congregation's committees will develop a focus of behaving in ways that have less of an impact on the Earth.



Janette McIntosh and daughter Keilen during their 70-day cross-Canada camping adventure.

McIntosh is also involved with KAIROS, the ecumenical social justice organization. Its current campaign on water (endorsed at last year's assembly) is something she believes in strongly. "It goes right back to my main concern and why I pursued this work in the first place," she said. "I feel called and compelled to share the concerns of developing countries and in the modern, urban context."

Environmental awareness resources

The Presbyterian Church's Social Handbook: **www.presbyterian.ca/justice/**

Energy workbook for religious buildings: **www.kairoscanada.org**

City of Toronto: **www.toronto.ca/bbp/projects/met_church.htm**

Manitoba Hydro's Power Smart for Business: **www.hydro.mb.ca/saving_with_ps/psmart_religious_loan.shtml**

Nova Scotia's Ministry of Energy: **gov.ns.ca/energy**

On Lightbulbs, Polar Bears and the Earth's Future: **www.earthfuture.com/climate/onlightbulbs.asp**

Seven Steps to Power Savings: **www.christianitytoday.com/yc/2001/001/2.18.html**

U.S. Energy Star: **www.energystar.gov**

God's People, God's Planet: Living Lightly on the Earth, by Erin Crisfield—a 2001 mission resource created for the PCC

Greening Congregations Handbook: Stories, Ideas and Resources for Cultivating Creation Awareness and Care in Your Congregation, by Earth Ministry—helps congregations develop an enduring, creation-honouring focus within all dimensions of congregational life

Footprint Files: Ideas To Help Congregations Care for Creation And Reduce Their Footprint, by Susan Gage, Briony Penn, Cory Waters and Peggy Wilmot, the Diocese of British Columbia, Anglican Church of Canada

Super, Natural Christians: How We Should Love Nature, by Sallie McFague

Life Abundant: Rethinking Theology and Economy for a Planet in Peril, by Sallie McFague

Our Ecological Footprint: Reducing Human Impact on the Earth, by Mathis Wackernagel and William Rees

The Sacred Balance, by David Suzuki and Amanda McConnel

Faith and the Common Good—a Canadian, multi-faith organization working towards finding common ground in world issues. They present a series of workshops on greening sacred spaces for interested communities. Their latest initiative is Renewing the Sacred Balance

Contact Janette McIntosh, elder at West Point Grey, Vancouver, at janettem@telus.net for more congregation-based initiatives.

–Joel Coppieters and Amy MacLachlan

Small steps can make big differences

BY JOEL COPPIETERS



PHOTO: WWW.ENERGYSTAR.GOV

While concerned churches have already taken small steps to reduce their environmental footprint, most of the damage comes from the energy buildings use. Typically, the grander the architecture, the harder it is to heat, power and light efficiently. With our better understanding of environmental issues and the higher cost of fuel, many congregations would build very differently if they had a chance to start from scratch. Here are some simple steps that can make a significant difference.

Plan your energy use

Portions of the building that are used in different ways at different times of the week should be on different temperature controls and might well need to be insulated from one another. Look through your weekly schedule and plan out the energy needs of each group and activity that meets in the building each day of the week. Planning out this kind of grid will help you ask questions not only about separate heating options, but also about scheduling. If the session and the board of managers are already meeting on Monday, perhaps it's more efficient if the other group meeting solely on Tuesday might switch to Monday so the building doesn't have to be reheated for a second time for a two-hour meeting.

Heating individual rooms at different times on different days of the week used to mean a caretaker had to come a few hours before the meeting to fire up the furnace, but inexpensive programmable thermostats are now available that can be retrofitted to most kinds of heating systems.

Update your insulation

Recent improvements in building technology mean that as your maintenance team replaces a door or a window, re-shingles a

Continued on page 23

Doing what comes naturally

KNOX, WATERLOO, ONTARIO

The original church was built in 1888. The current building was erected in 1927 and enlarged in 1957.

Rev. Linda Ashfield said, "There is lots to learn about the environment. I want to be educated. I am grateful for the community of faith. I like it when people push us to try new ideas."

Some of the congregation's initiatives include: purchasing environmentally friendly products for cleaning; not using pesticides on the church grounds and being more conscious of water usage. They don't use disposable cups and do use recycling paper bins. The church also has a paper shredder.

Ashfield said that the congregation uses fair trade coffee and sells it. The children were encouraged to ask for reusable water bottles as stocking stuffers.

An occasional workshop, Unplug the Christmas Machine, encourages environmental friendly gift giving. Some forms of alternate gift-giving considered by the congregation include Habitat for Humanity, Presbyterian World Service and Development and purchasing from the Mennonite Church's Ten Thousand Villages, which is a fair trade retailer. – *Hilda Young*

RENFREW, ONTARIO

The beautiful stone church and adjoining manse are located on the banks of a ravine, which creates a buffer zone near a creek, surrounded by green space, in an attractive area of downtown Renfrew. Over the last 10 years, says Rev. Brian Sharpe, developers have come looking to purchase the church's "vacant lot." Each time the session has said no. Money is not always important. The session is more concerned with having the land available for everyone to enjoy. It has become part of the town's Millennium Trail. Deer and other wildlife come on the ravine so the congregation enjoys the location.

Sharpe said church members are continually looking for ways to reduce waste. The recycling bins are used for all church functions. If they are not put out in time for the garbage, Presbyterian neighbours put them out. Bulletins are also recycled and a generic bulletin is used all summer. Unused bulletins from church office are cut up and used for note pads. The old Sunday school curriculum is also reused and revamped. Surplus books and Bibles have been donated to Christian salvage. When the new hymnbooks were purchased, the old ones were repaired and donated to two congregations in the presbytery. The congregation recently purchased LED Christmas lights as they are more environmentally friendly and will last seven years. – *HY*

PINAWA CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Pinawa Christian Fellowship is a 42-year-old multi-denominational *Continued on page 23*



Youth from troubled neighbourhoods learn life skills at the Rockcliffe Demonstration and Teaching Garden in Toronto. Inset: Solomon Boyé

Raising adults by raising crops

BY AMY MACLACHLAN

Gardening as a cure to gun crime? For Solomon Boyé, a former elder at Victoria Royce Church, Toronto, the two ideas are a match. "Nature is resilient but you have to abide by the rules," said Boyé. "If you don't weed, the plants will be choked out. If you don't water, the plants will wither and die. We use the garden to teach patience and caring."

Boyé is the coordinator of Toronto's community gardens program—a project that brought together various groups to increase gardens in the city and help at-risk youth. "Why not hire youth to work the gardens?" he asked. "They can walk to work and their backyard becomes their workplace. They take care of it."

He said investing in the community is key when it comes to curbing Toronto's recent rise in gun crime. The project helps youth value their community and the land on which they live, while developing a sense of pride and responsibility and a healthy work ethic. Seeing the fruits of their labour is also a motivator for future success. Sensitivity training, tolerance and diversity issues are taught as opportunities arise. "The idea is to learn as much as possible that can be applied elsewhere," said Boyé. "They learn technical skills, as well as life skills and application."

The original initiative began as a partnership with FoodShare Toronto, a holistic organization working to make food a priority at all levels of society. The city of Toronto soon became involved, offering more opportunities and a cohesive, organized program. It has become so popular that there is a waiting list to be hired on the farm. Employees are paid $10 an hour for work that stretches from May to August.

Boyé's concern for the environment began with a degree in agricultural business from Guelph University. A native of Ghana, he began working with the city's parks department in 1989 as a parks labourer, and worked his way up. Since then, he has been honored with an Ethics in Action award in 2001, recognizing leadership in corporate social responsibility. His interest in troubled youth began at Victoria Royce, where he visited half-way homes with the church's then-minister, Rev. George French, who remains a good friend.

"Many of the youth start and have no idea what it will yield, but they see how it's all connected and the person is transformed," said Boyé. "The land gives freedom. It liberates you."

GROWING YOUR GREEN THUMB

There are numerous ways to get involved in community gardening in Toronto. The Junior Gardener Program works with local schools to teach kids about caring for the land. The Peer Nutrition Program brings different nationalities together to teach each other their traditional ways of gardening and farming. The Community Gardens Volunteer Stewardship Program is open to anyone wanting to learn more about gardening—particularly using organic methods. Boyé said an average of 15 people come out each week. Various nutrition and health programs operated in cooperation with Toronto Public Health take place at the training centre. A recent offering was on nutrition and obesity and taught the values of aerobic gardening, exercise and the healthy food a harvest yields.

Continued from page 21

roof or just re-finishes a wall, you can opt for materials with better insulation values.

There should also be a complete insulation inventory of the building, checking everything from heat loss in the attic to the weather stripping on doors and windows.

Stained glass windows look great but do a poor job of keeping the heat in. New technology offers alternatives to plastic sheeting and masking tape.



Regular maintenance, which would include a yearly cleaning of ducts and a tune up for oil furnaces, is a must. The next time a cleaning is scheduled, have someone from the building committee sit down with the technician to talk about new alternatives.

Heat pumps are one of the most popular recent additions since they not only lower heating costs in the winter but also allow for some interesting cooling options during the summer.

Consider updating your equipment and appliances

When Hebron Baptist, Dacula, Ga., replaced the conventional bulbs that were burning 24 hours a day in more than 300 emergency exit signs around their facilities with longer-lasting screw-in fluorescent tubes, there was an immediate energy saving and an ongoing maintenance saving on bulb replacement.

Look closely at the energy consumption label when buying appliances for the church kitchen. Since fridges and freezers are very expensive to run half empty, using water-filled jugs and plastic containers to fill them up can add up to dramatic savings over a year.

Saving energy = saving money

As you listen to suggestions and consider your options, keep an eye on the budget and another on the environment. You would be surprised how often energy conservation and cost efficiency go hand in hand. Can you imagine getting some bold recommendations from your building committee that would get the approval of your budget conscious seniors, excite your environmentally conscious young people and please the Creator who entrusted both resources to you for considerate care?

– Joel Coppieters is a freelance writer.

Continued from page 21

congregation in rural Manitoba. It worships in an elementary school gym and uses the classrooms for Sunday school.

Members do not use throwaway cups, plates and cutlery. Dishes are washed either at members' homes or in the school sinks. Members are encouraged to bring their own mugs for coffee.

They have been active in the non-profit Pinawa Recycling Inc., which is run mostly by volunteers. It has grown from a back of a pick-up truck processing several hundred kilograms per year to one that occupies two buildings that processed more than 115 tonnes of recyclable material in 2002. Pinawa Recycling is the story of many a volunteer's persistence, sacrifice and skill.

Derri Evans, the current PCF recycling volunteer, believes, that "as Christians we are called to be caretakers of the Earth. God has loaned us the Earth. We should minimize our impact on it to the best of our ability."

Money raised by recycling has been poured back into the community, including starting a food bank. *–HY*

CAMP GLEN MHOR

Our methods of controlling our energy and waste usage:

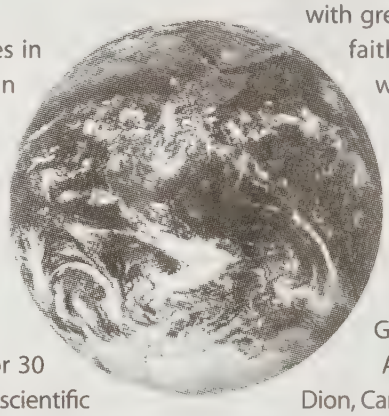
- all interior incandescent bulbs switched to compact fluorescents (CF)
- all exterior spots switched to CF (where fixtures allow)
- all lights in areas with intermittent use set to timers (except places like the kitchen, health centre, etc.)
- we turn off the lights inside cabins for the summer (you can't turn them on)
- we use solar-powered garden lights for each cabin
- we use raw (untreated water) in our toilets (cuts down on the amount of chlorine in the septic system, therefore in the groundwater; also means less energy treating toilet water unnecessarily)
- retrofitted both four-season buildings with new windows
- exterior lights are on a photo sensor so they won't be left on during the day
- we meter all of our water so that we have a daily record of how much water we use; this way we can compare one year to the other in order to show the campers the amount of water a group of 160 people uses in a day
- our county has an excellent recycling program; its only draw back is that there isn't any pickup; so, two or three times a week we take one minivan to the local dump where it is put in to approriate bins
- we reuse one-sided paper
- we recycle: paper (office paper that has been used on both sides, all toilet paper, paper towel rolls, any paper packaging), plastics, cans, metal and cardboard
- we had an energy audit done in the mid-90s and have based a lot of our changes on that audit
- we are part of the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program and we work with a forester to improve the condition of our 200 acres and also to create forestry program to teach our campers
- we also have a number of future plans to improve things: solar water preheats (which use less electric and propane in the water heaters because the water is hotter to start with); tankless hotwater heaters (which use less than 33 per cent of the energy as hot water tank).

– Travis "Zoic" Allison, co-executive director, Glen Mhor and Iona Programmes. www.ilovecamp.org

A Spiritual Declaration on Climate Change

- **We hear the call of the Earth**
- **We believe that caring for life on Earth is a spiritual commitment**
- **People and other species have the right to life unthreatened by human greed and destructiveness**
- **Pollution, particularly from the energy-intensive wealthy industrialized countries, is warming the atmosphere. A warmer atmosphere is leading to major climate changes. The poor and vulnerable in the world and future generations will suffer the most**
- **We commit ourselves to help reduce the threat of climate change through actions in our own lives, pressure on governments and industries and standing in solidarity with those most affected by climate change**
- **We pray for spiritual support in responding to the call of the Earth**

This declaration was signed by 2,000 delegates in December at the United Nations meeting on climate change in Montreal. Amongst those was Joan Masterton, who works in Planned Giving at church offices and represents the church on the Ecological Justice Program Committee of KAIROS. She was a delegate of the World Council of Churches at the meeting.

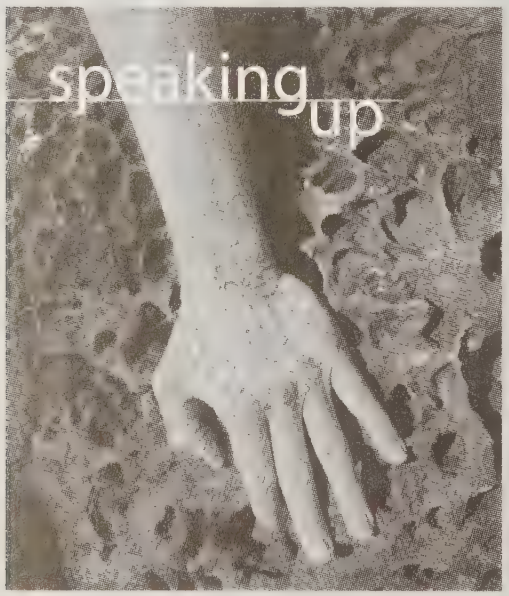


She writes:

"As a climatologist for Environment Canada for 30 years, I have had the opportunity to learn from the scientific community how integrated all life on the planet truly is, and how unbalancing one part of the web of life, such as the atmosphere, can impact all other parts of it. Climate change is complex, long term and linked to poor air quality, the thinning ozone layer and acid rain. It plays a role in the invasion of new species (plants, animals and diseases), the decline and disappearance of other species, the rising of the oceans and disappearance of island states and global coastlines. The melting of the Arctic ice cap in the summers to come will have profound impacts on the peoples of the north, trans-polar crossings of supertankers and on the global circulation of ocean currents. Changes in weather patterns and more extreme weather are just the tip of the iceberg.

I believe that climate change also represents a spiritual crisis for God's people. Read Genesis 1. In it, human beings are directed by God to "take charge" and to "be responsible" for the rest of creation. This is God's world and God considers it "very good." God says nothing about maximizing profit or It's only business or What's wrong with greed? or planned obsolescence. How can people of faith respond? In this year of Preparing for Sabbath within The Presbyterian Church in Canada, let us take time to consider the Sabbath of the land, to "hear the call of the Earth." Let us consider how we live our lives as individuals (drive less and walk more), as congregations (do an energy audit and insulate) and as a national body of faith (prepare a path to help congregations answer the question, How is God calling us to care for his creation?)."

A copy of the declaration was presented to Stéphane Dion, Canada's Minister of the Environment and President of the United Nations Conference meetings in Montreal, and Richard Kinley, the (Canadian) Officer-in-Charge of the UN Secretariat.



Words by Stuart Coles, sung to the tune of Abide With Me, music by William Henry Monk.

Earth-killing race, repent your deadly ways

Jesus: "Turn around, and believe the good news"

Earth-killing race, repent your deadly ways.
Earth is your mother: from her sands and clays
Emerged a race whose head is crowned with flame;
Yet falls to grasp God's anguished cry: "For shame!"

Earth could be well and all her peoples wise.
Age after age our violent empires rise.
Built while we dream and in that dreaming weep;
Let us wake up from our tormented sleep.

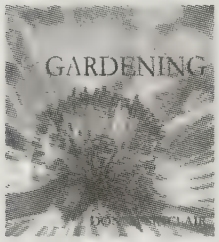
Earth shall be well and all her peoples one;
Not till that day is God's good purpose done.
Now despite all that's wrong we get good news;
Peace is a path that each and all can choose.

Doors to significant dialogue

Three books explore the spirituality of the earthy

BY KENNETH STRIGHT

The Spirituality of Gardening
Donna Sinclair
Northstone



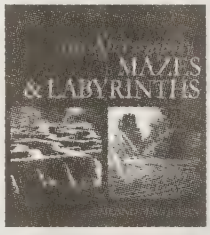
Sinclair bids us know the connectedness between hoeing and healing, seasons of growth and the seasons of the spirit, gardening and Gaia (a living Earth). In an age of ever-increasing sensitivity to the fragility and vulnerability of our environment, Sinclair touches deep places within where we connect at levels that go beyond our understanding. "Gardens are our connection to the land and to the One who created it." She asks us to listen to modern stewards of the land, such as the Aboriginal peoples who nurture it and to ancient voices that take us back to the first garden in harmony with God and the world around us. And the reality is that all this is in danger. "We humans can alter Earth's intricate rhythm of rain and sun. We can destroy the delicate soil-making creatures on which her abundance depends. And then we would be orphaned."

The next time you are tempted to take all this for granted, listen to Rev. Stan MacKay, first Native moderator of the United Church who simply said, "*This* is the holy land."

Says Sinclair, "Gardens are about memory. They help us remember the good given to us by the Creator." Life shall become like a watered garden. The dream of returning to Eden, to 'home'. I wonder if Mary was completely wrong when she supposed Jesus to be the gardener when she went looking for death but found life?

The Spirituality of Mazes and Labyrinths
Gailand MacQueen
Northstone

This coffee table collectible is a how-to book from beginning to end, inviting the reader into the madness of the maze along with the potential to solve a problem or two along the way. And when computer-generated mazes add to the madness, you end up with Dungeons and Dragons or worse. The world of the maze is anything



but soothing or reflective or relaxing. Most of the mazes had my stomach in more knots than the maze itself contained. Yes, the title is misleading—there really isn't much waiting for someone looking for the spirituality of mazes but maybe the labyrinth makes up for that. MacQueen begins and ends with the labyrinth, and suggests the labyrinth may prove a useful tool in talks with other faith tradition. "Here is an unthreatening tool, which most religions share in one form or another; here is a door to significant dialogue and mutual learning; here is a ritual we can celebrate together, without compromising anyone's faith." It is somewhat strange that this was written by Gailand MacQueen—he is something of a modern maze himself, holding advanced degrees in philosophy, theology and educational theory, while lecturing in Religious Studies. Then again, maybe he's more the labyrinth, finding his true centre in this ancient symbol. The pictures are intriguing, the writing is clear and concise and then there's all those maddening mazes (make certain you play the book maze which will bring you finally to the end.)

The Spirituality of Wine
Tom Harpur
Northstone



"The ultimate test of any spirituality is experience," says Harpur and he takes us on a test of the senses to experience the connection between wine and spirituality, a test far beyond the biblical encouragement to "taste and see that the Lord is good." All the senses get involved in the experience of wine. Indeed the whole being is necessary. "The reason our ancient ancestors celebrated every stage in the making of wine was that they saw in every step a mirror of their own lives. The analogy ran at several levels, from the purely social to the inner development of their unique lives." This coffee table collectible offers us a feast for the eyes as well as a feast of words and wisdom from the accumulated insights of the ages seen through an aged vintage or a respectable modern Australian or Canadian.

What is more spiritual experience than … a lover's metaphor of wine's intoxicating power, "Oh, may your breasts be like clusters of the vine?"

Or … a friendship's long lasting bond sealed with a glass of wine, "For a wine to taste like a real wine, it has to be drunk with a friend?"

And always, good Presbyterians that we are, we remember Harpur's adage: "Not too much. Not too fast." I think at the least Harpur's *The Spirituality of Wine* deserves a toast, so I'll drink to that!

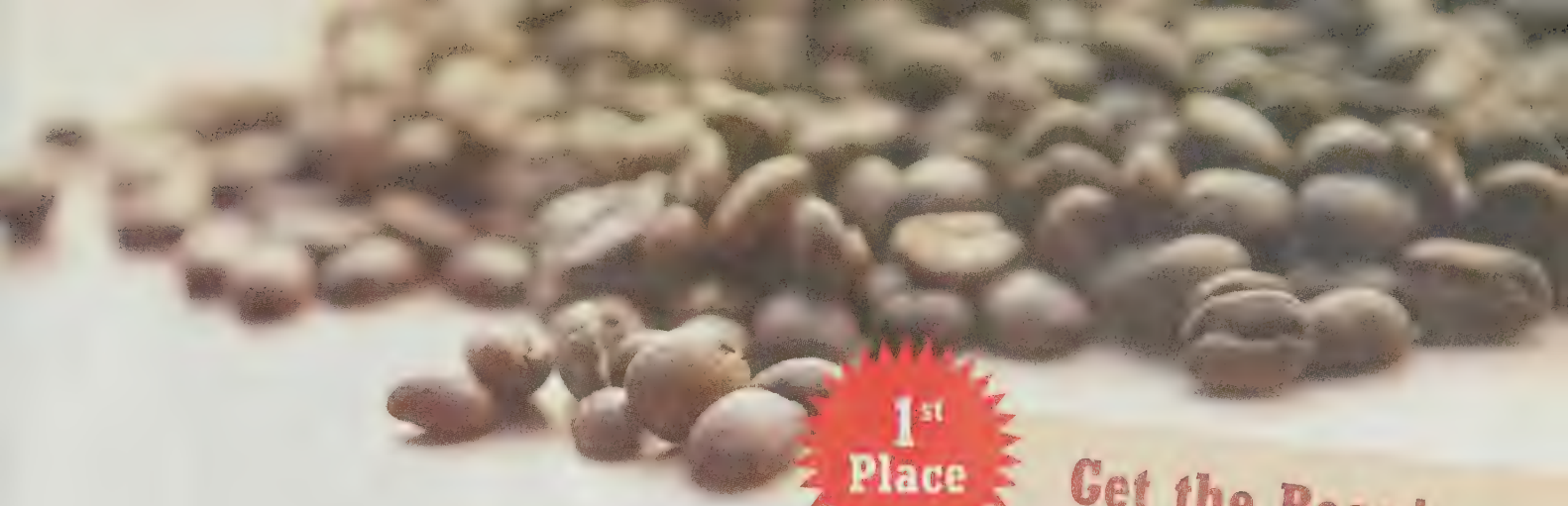
L' Chayim!

Rev. Kenneth Stright was the FLAMES initiative coordinator for the Year of Spirituality.

Raise a mug to the mocha mission

Congregations get creative in their devotion to fair trade





1st Place

Get the Bean!

Words and Music by David Buckley
Director of Music
Knox Presbyterian Church, Dundas, Ont.

Chorus:
Get the bean, got to get the bean, got to get the bean,
Got to get the bean, got to get the bean,
Got to get the bean, got to get the bean,
Got to get the bean, got to get the bean,
Got to get the bean!

What goes into your percolator
Is more than you might think of right away
'Cause the folks who work for the source of that great flavour
Might never make more than a pittance for their pay

Their lives are caught being stuck in the middle
With mouths to feed, it's so hard to break away
But you can help at a cost so very little
If you look for the label that clearly says "fair trade"

Chorus:
Get the bean, got to get the bean, got to get the bean,
Got to get the bean, got to get the bean,
Got to get the bean, got to get the bean,
Got to get the bean, got to get the bean,
Got to get the bean!

The thirst you have for your cup of flavour
Can never compare with their thirst for better days
So give them thanks with true value for their labour
The joy is rich with the beans that say "fair trade"

Bridge:
We all can help in this situation
For those who now are little more than slaves
It all adds up with no limitations
We all will win with the beans that say "fair trade"

Chorus:
Get the bean, got to get the bean, got to get the bean,
Got to get the bean, got to get the bean,
Got to get the bean, got to get the bean,
Got to get the bean, got to get the bean,
Got to get the bean!

To hear the Buckley family sing this song, go to www.presbyterianrecord.ca

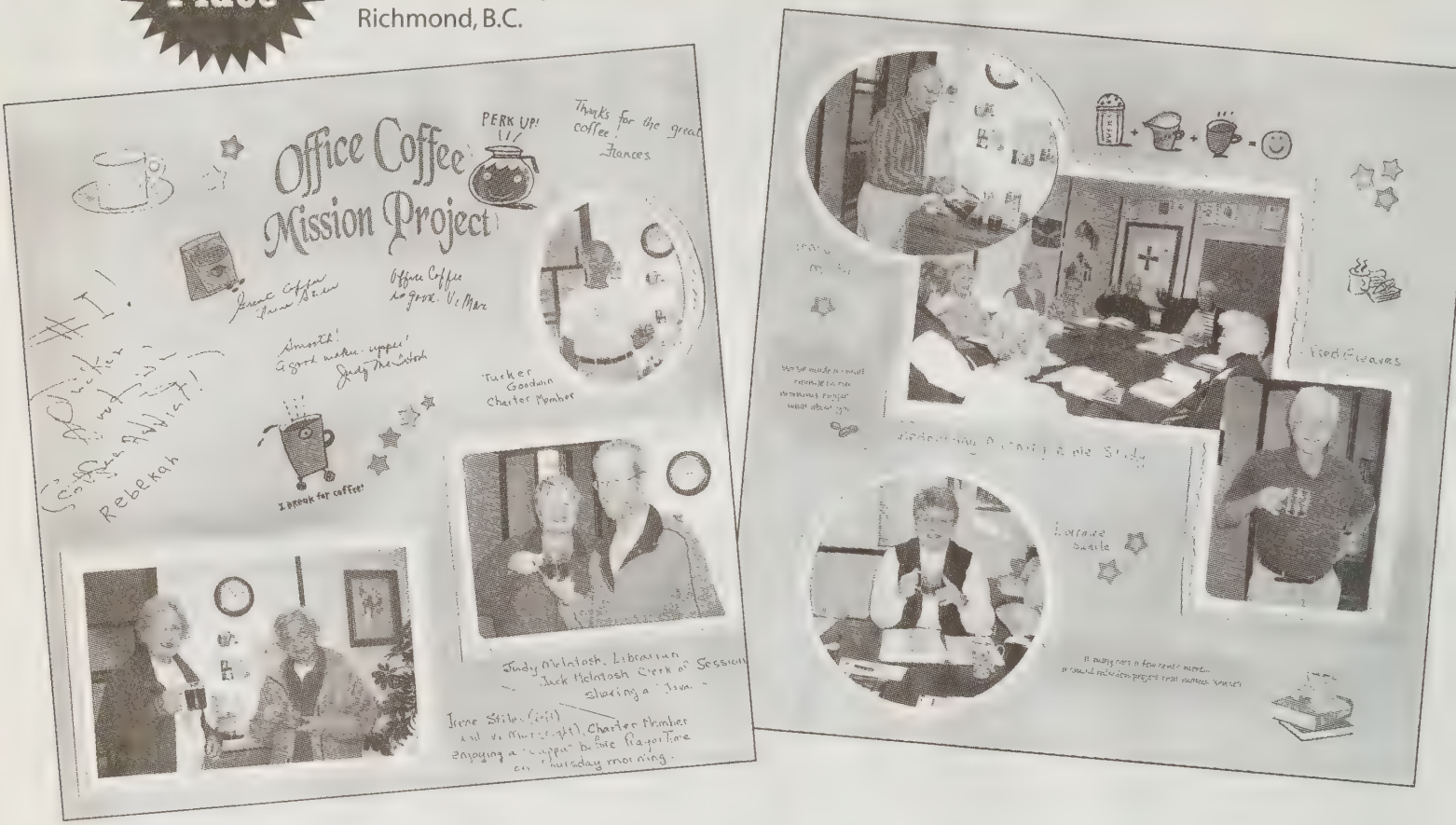
The May issue of the *Record* featured a cover story on fair trade—the practice of paying farmers a fair wage for their work. The article focused on coffee (which ranks second to oil in world trade), but there are many other fair trade products available, many of which can be delivered right to your door. In an effort to encourage congregations to switch to fairly traded coffee, the *Record* announced a contest to award those who made the switch. The response was tremendous, with contestants submitting creative and touching artwork, poetry, essays and songs. We even heard from congregations that had undertaken fair trade projects but didn't manage to enter the contest. Leaside Church in Toronto was one such congregation. As a direct response to the *Record* article, Cathy Finlay, a Leaside member for more than 30 years and an elder for 20, brought the issue to session. She urged them to support social justice by serving fairly traded coffee at Sunday coffee hour. "Being a farmer's daughter, I'm concerned about farmers being treated fairly so they can have an improved quality of life," Finlay told the *Record*. "It's a social justice issue for me."

The session agreed to make the switch during the fall, and Finlay hopes they will agree to continue long after (a decision was pending at press time). The congregation has enjoyed the specialty coffee served on Sundays, and 21 families order coffee, tea and hot chocolate through the church—an initiative supported by Glebe Church, Toronto, which already practiced this. By partnering with another congregation when orders are small, money is saved, as the cost is lower for large orders. "I hope very much that we have this as a continual project," said Finlay. Like the congregation at Leaside, many Presbyterian congregations have decided to support fair trade, and told us so via the contest.

Choosing a winner was nearly impossible. Our panel of three judges—Amy MacLachlan, staff writer for the *Record*, Annemarie Klassen, general secretary, Education for Discipleship and Mary Beth McLean with International Ministries—were overwhelmed by the submissions. In the end they had to choose somebody.

Office Coffee Mission Project

Lorraine Swaile
Richmond Presbyterian Church
Richmond, B.C.



Fair Trade Home Parties

by Jolica



What could be more rewarding than helping artisan families around the world?

Now you can afford to get involved.



Beautiful handmade silver jewelry, leather handbags, silk scarves and alpaca shawls.

CHOOSE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Jolica
The Art of Giving

Contact Jolica at
Toll free: 1-877-531-2921
email: info@jolica.com
or visit us at www.jolica.com

Mocha Mission Winners

First Place Get The Bean, words and music by David Buckley, on behalf of Knox, Dundas, Ont. *The church will receive two pounds of fair trade coffee each month for a year from Alternative Grounds, in Toronto.* To hear the Buckley family perform this song please go to our website.

Second Place Quilt, made by Barbara J. Ormston, on behalf of St. Paul's, Sault Ste. Marie, Ont. Ms. Ormston wrote, "The interlocking circles of café au lait, café crème, coffee and black burlap represent the chains of economic slavery which exists in the absence of fair trade. All Christians should fervently embrace and fully support the economic principle of fair trade." *The church will receive two pounds of fair trade coffee and a travel mug from Bean North Roasting Company, Whitehorse, Yukon.*

Third Place Office Coffee Mission Project scrapbook, submitted by Lorraine Swaile, Richmond, B.C. While many of the other entrants were personal efforts on behalf of a church, this was one of very few efforts in which the whole congregation seemed to get involved. *The church will receive a bag of coffee and a mug from Ten Thousand Villages, Oakville and Yonge St., Toronto.*

Fourth Place The Fair Trade Coffee Song by Henrietta Beattie on behalf of St. Columba, Belleville, Ont. *The church will receive a ceramic teapot from Ten Thousand Villages on Danforth Ave., in Toronto.* To hear this song performed by the Fair Trade Chorus please go to our website.

Other submissions to the Mocha Mission contest will be published in future issues of the *Record*.

4th Place

Fair Trade Coffee

Lyrics and music by Henrietta Beattie
St. Columba, Belleville, Ont.

Are you switching to the coffee,
That will help the growers, too?
Farmers need us to support them
For their work that's fair and true
Drink the coffee that is Fair Trade
You will help abundantly.
Are you switching to the coffee
That will help the growers too?

Drink the coffee that is "Fair Trade"
Won't you switch to help them, too?
Feeding families, teaching children,
Working lad, now take a stand!
Every purchase is important
Has an impact on their lives
Drink the coffee that is "Fair Trade"
Won't you switch to help them too?

Buy the coffee that is "Fair Trade"
Tell your neighbours and your friends
The producers need a fair wage
For the cash crops sold to you
Community programs, environmental practics,
Guaranteed markets, shelter and food.
Buy the coffee that is "Fair Trade"
Tell you neighbours and your friends.

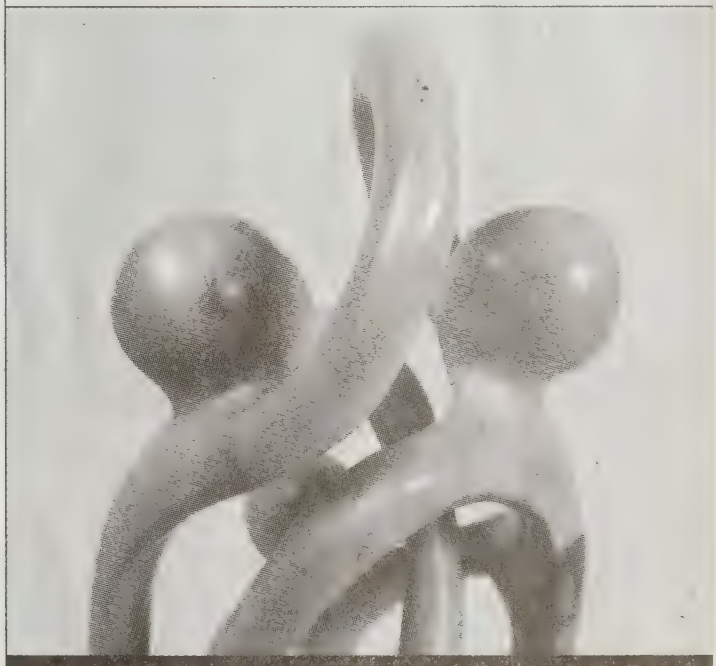
Visit www.presbyterianrecord.ca to listen to the Fair Trade Chorus sing this song.

TEN THOUSAND VILLAGES



Proud Sponsor of the Mocha Mission Contest
189 Lakeshore Rd. E., Oakville
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2599 Yonge Street, Toronto
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www.TenThousandVillages.ca
FAIRLY TRADED PRODUCTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

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Proud Sponsor of the Mocha Mission Contest
362 Danforth Avenue, Toronto
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www.TenThousandVillages.ca
FAIRLY TRADED PRODUCTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD



Don's Coffee Pot

by Claire Ross Dunn
Morningside-High Park, Toronto

Honourable Mention

Don Jennison attended our church. I say "our church", but it's not because I'm a member: I have often joked with Morningside-High Park's minister, Will Ingram, that I am the church's token heathen. He always laughs and tells me that I am the most church-going heathen he knows. I married a Presbyterian boy, son of a minister, who was son of a minister, who was son of a minister. And yet no one on my husband's side has ever pressured me to become a card-carrying member, and I've appreciated the freedom to continue to ask questions. I have preferred to remain undeclared.

Don Jennison, a retired school principal, and old enough to be my father, was the first person to really connect with me at Morningside. I started a penny rolling extravaganza to raise money for the Stephen Lewis Foundation—and for several Sundays, Don sat right by my side, rolling pennies. Over the course of our chatting and rolling, chatting and rolling, I discovered that Don had never been a member of Morningside either—he too had many questions that were unanswered, and he preferred his adherent status.

And yet there we both were, Sunday after Sunday. Up until then, I had found myself wondering if there were a real place for me in church if I didn't officially declare myself; the minister's soft joking aside, Don taught me that there was.

Not long after that, Don's Mission and Outreach Committee bought Fair Trade coffee to be served at coffee time. I praised them for this—he said that if I liked that, I should come on board. He felt the committee needed a type like me (whatever that is). I turned him down—politely—said I was overcommitted as it was. Every Sunday after that, over a cup of Fair Trade coffee, Don and I talked about justice issues. Freedom. Fairness. He eventually wore me down: I allowed him to make me an 'honorary member' of Mission and Outreach. I never attended a meeting, but he slipped me the minutes once a month with a smile.

Don died in April after a long battle in hospital. Everything I have heard about his long and busy life told me he was a man of action, so I've been looking for a way to act, in Don's name.

Morningside-High Park is launching a fundraiser in the fall of 2005 called Don's Coffee Pot. We are selling Fair Trade coffee at bulk prices to raise money to build a school in Africa, hopefully for AIDS orphans, in Don's name (seeing as he was a principal, it feels like a fitting tribute). We are also, of course, continuing to drink Fair Trade coffee every Sunday—but if we were to receive the *Presbyterian Record*'s one year's worth of Fair Trade coffee, we'd put it toward Don's Coffee Pot. Get the ball rolling. Because Don was a man of action—and now I'm changing my status from honorary to active, in his name.





Equipping the saints for ministry

Identity is a key to how we interpret the Bible

BY GEOFF JOHNSTON



Canadians and Taiwanese usher in the age of partnership.

The mission era is over, the partnership era is upon us. But what does partnership mean when one church no longer sends missionaries and the other no longer sends students for training? Last August the colleges of The Presbyterian Church in Taiwan and the colleges of The Presbyterian Church in Canada tried something new. Students and staff from the Canadian colleges went to Taiwan for a consultation with students and staff of the Taiwanese colleges on biblical interpretation. The professors from each college made presentations and professors from the other country responded. It made for lively and stimulating discussion.

By the end of the meeting, identity had emerged as a crucial common theme. There was the identity of the biblical author. Who was this person, or persons, who left us the text? There was the identity of the interpreter; we all go to the Bible with different identities, men or women, old or young, Canadian or Taiwanese.



The students were given a selection of texts and asked to prepare a sermon outline. One of the texts was the story of Moses' adoption by an Egyptian princess. Two students, a Canadian and a Taiwanese, chose this text, but approached it in entirely different ways. The Canadian gave a series of very personal reasons why he had chosen this text and expounded it in terms of the low-key ways God deals with us. The Taiwanese student saw the story as the beginning of Israel's liberation, a liberation he saw as similar to that beginning in Taiwan. From 1895 to 1945 Taiwan was part of the Japanese Empire, and the Taiwanese were expected to be Japanese. Then they came under the control of the nationalist government from mainland China, and they were expected to be Chinese. At no time were they allowed to be Taiwanese. In the last 10 years things have loosened up a bit, and the Taiwanese student saw a parallel between his people's experience and that of the Jews. The Canadian acknowledged there was a liberation element in the story, but he regarded it as secondary. His Taiwanese colleague disagreed.

In other words, who we are influences how we read the Bible. Within reason, there is no right interpretation of a text. These differences were not deplored in our discussions; they were celebrated. At times it seemed that the theme of the consultation was In Praise of Ambiguity.

Still, the experience was worth repeating. We plan to have another meeting in Canada in a couple of years. The conversation, and the partnership, continues.

Geoff Johnston is a busy but retired minister.

Equipping the saints for the ministry

A volunteer does mission work in the storied Jane and Finch neighbourhood of Toronto

BY CHELSEA MASTERMAN

Between July and December of 2005, four international missionaries were stationed at one of Toronto's most troubled and racially diverse neighbourhoods, Jane and Finch. As members of a Joint Action Mission Team, which is sponsored by the Caribbean North America Council for Mission, the four lived, worked and played with the community. The Presbyterian Church is a member of CANACOM. The lone Canadian, Chelsea Masterman, is a United Church member from High Level, Alta.

I am a missionary. I have some issues with the term, because it has connotations of foisting your views on others. My experience here, however, is expanding my definition of the word. You see, my group—LaToya Bonner, Dwight McFarlane, Jenifa (Jenny) Sinanan and myself—spent the first month of our time in Jane-Finch learning about the issues, meeting people and get ting connected with community organizations. The amount of love in the community—the hospitality, the church involvement and the community groups—overwhelms the problems of drugs and violence that exist. Rather than foisting, we were there soaking everything in as best we could.

Jane-Finch is incredibly diverse: There are about 70 nationalities speaking 115 languages. It is a popular place for new Canadians to settle, although the low-income housing is used by anyone struggling to make ends meet. Much of the population here has gone or is going through some degree of culture shock. Parents (often single parents) have to work long hours or shift work, the schools are packed and the children need attention.

Dwight and LaToya volunteered at Black Creek Community Health Centre's



The team: Dwight McFarlane (Jamaica), Chelsea Masterman, LaToya Bonner (Jamaica) and Jenifa Sinanan (Trinidad).

Teen Violence Prevention Project, a discussion and action project run largely by teens and facilitated by the adults involved. Jenny worked with Presbyterian congregations and a shelter for abused women and children in another community called Malvern, an area with a huge population and a relatively small amount of community or church resources. It is hoped that, along with serving the community, she may be able to help communicate some of the wisdom of Jane-Finch's organizations and solutions to the people she works with in Malvern.

I worked with the Centre for Spanish-Speaking Peoples, volunteering for the youth program, where I did some administration support. The main project is getting the tutoring program they run in cooperation with the Organization of Latin American Students re-started. I volunteered with the women's program there, running a spirituality program for the children who came to the centre with their mothers. This is not a religious program, but is intended to help the children get in touch with their spirit within.

The churches that take part in these initiatives are part of a coalition of five different denominations. While theologies in these churches may differ in some aspects, they are all aiming at the same prize: uplifting the youth of Jane-Finch.

In September, a commissioning service was held for us at the Pentecostal Shiloah House of Prayer (where Margaret Zondo, administrator for International Ministries, spoke on behalf of the PCC). Ephesians 4: 11-13 really spoke to me: "The gifts He gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ."

People keep calling me a missionary. I have a tendency to hide behind the word volunteer. Whatever you want to call it, the truth is that I am doing this because I feel the firm and gentle pressure of God's call in my life. God is doing things in Jane-Finch, and I was lucky enough to be a part of it. It can be humbling (and sometimes difficult) to face the fact that I was not there to do grand things and come to the community's rescue, but I was there to do what was asked of me—to listen and act upon the wisdom and experience of others, instead of championing my own.

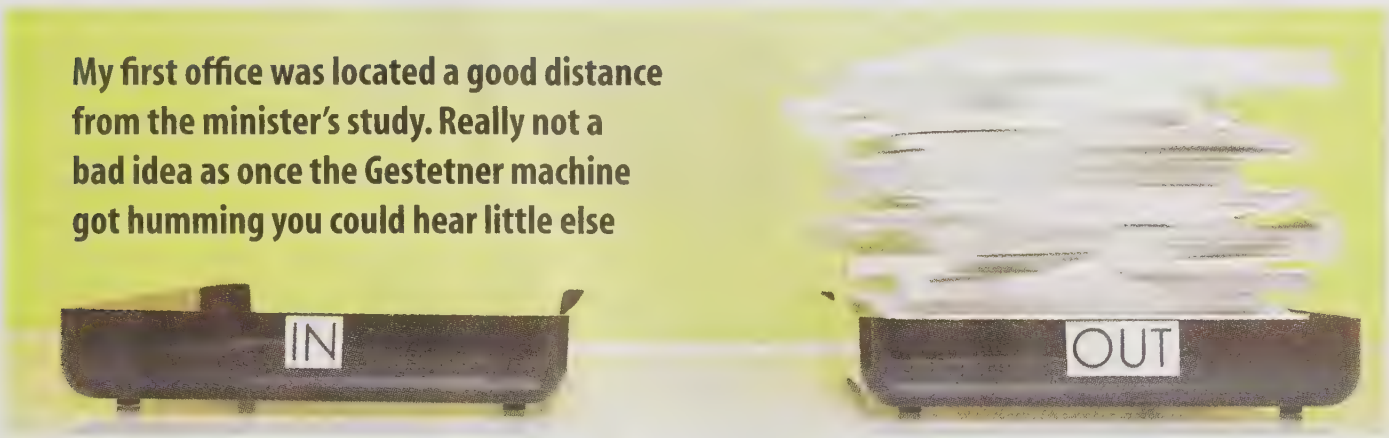
For more information on CANACOM and the JOMAT program, please check out *http://groups.msn.com/CaribbeanandNorthAmericaCouncilforMission.*

Keeping four hundred bosses happy

A church secretary looks back on 30 years of sorting rolls and other memories

BY PATRICIA SCHNEIDER

My first office was located a good distance from the minister's study. Really not a bad idea as once the Gestetner machine got humming you could hear little else



I'm about to close the door behind me when I take one last look into the room. It holds a million memories. Memories of days spent with people I loved, doing a job I truly loved.

Tears fill my eyes, then I remember that God has new plans for me. I close the door. My time here is finished.

When I first applied for the job as church secretary, I didn't talk to the minister. The head of the hiring committee checked my credentials. I could type, use the adding machine and had my mornings free. The only added stipulation was that I was to keep the congregation of 400 and the minister happy. Thirty years later, I still consider them my personal friends.

My first office was located a good distance from the minister's study. Really not a bad idea as once the Gestetner machine got humming you could hear little else.

The initial challenge was the electric typewriter, which had a very long carriage. Computer-minded people who just click on portrait or landscape may find this difficult to understand but it was the only way to do the Sunday bulletins in those days. I finally mastered the typewriter. Next was the Gestetner machine. This unique contraption stood about one foot high and held a special form that when typed on and attached to the machine would make as many copies as you wanted or until the paper ran out, whichever came first. Getting the thin, transparent sheet on the machine without a wrinkle and without adorning yourself with Gestetner ink was a challenge, but eventually I learned how.

A tiny kitchen was located right behind the minister's study. One morning he was doing some counselling with a female parishioner. As I tidied the few dishes in the sink, a large plate slipped, crashing to the floor. Later I apologized to the minister. With a twinkle in his eye he observed, "When you're counselling an upset woman it never hurts for them to know there is someone else in the building."

One year it was decided to update the church roll. I knew just the person to help. Our most senior church lady spent two hours reviewing the names with me. How sorry I was that there wasn't a tape recorder running at the time. She had me mesmerized with her stories and memories of people well before my time.

Getting help wasn't always easy and one summer day we were desperate. Everyone we phoned was on holidays.

Like an answer to a prayer, the phone rang. A group of young people from the East were in town looking for a worthy cause. They'd give us a hand if we'd just give them lunch. Where they came from or where they went, I never did find out. God works in mysterious ways.

We had a conference one week with many out-of-towners. I made sure coffee was on and the bathrooms tidy. The secretary's office was right across from the washrooms. A man walked in one morning and said he was sorry to bother me but he needed some paper. My cheeks blazing, I reached under the counter and handed him a roll of toilet paper. His cheeks blazing he handed it back. "What I really want is some writing paper," he explained.

The church renovations were done and then suddenly both the ministers decided to move on. I too felt my time here was finished.

A few years ago I visited the senior lady who had done the church roll years before. She was in a nursing home and said she couldn't remember me … then, peering at me intently, she added "But, there is the aura of church about you."

It was the nicest compliment I ever received.

Patricia Schneider lives in Grand Prairie, Alberta.

Seeking the frightening answers

Old-fashioned virtues not more social programs will heal the killing fields of Toronto

Toronto is still writhing after a series of fatal shootings in its black community and still in shock that a white teenaged girl became a Christmas victim of the slaughter. But if truth be told it doesn't really make very much difference if the shootings are in Toronto, Winnipeg, Edmonton or anywhere else in Canada and it shouldn't matter if the communities in question are black or not.



Gangsters killed for money. Now they kill for fun. There were sacred areas. Now the whole nation is a killing field. There were families. Now there is breeding

Nor does it alter the response of the chattering classes, who are so complacent that they fail to understand that they are partly to blame for the mess we now face. The answer is not more social programs and more public money and the cause is not racism.

Of course racism exists, and any native or black person will tell you so. At the same time we as Christians have to ask, for example, why Chinese, South Asian and so many other minority groups are doing so well in Canadian society. They also face racism and often have the added challenge of having English as a second language.

If we want to consider genuine racism, ask the Irish Catholics, Ukrainians and so many others who were told to their faces that they were not welcome and would not get a job. You could have asked my late father, who read the signs announcing, "Jews Need Not Apply" and "No Dogs, No Jews."

Phil Coren did not shoot people on the street. He worked very hard indeed and made the system respect him.

As for social programs, these are similarly irrelevant. It's not that they are redundant but that they have become a feel-good and expensive digression for the middle classes. Throw some money at the troubled urban centres so that we can then ignore them.

These pained communities can certainly use apprenticeship programs where young people are channelled into meaningful jobs and in time become tax-paying and productive citizens. They do not and should not, however, merit special treatment simply because they are incapable of acting responsibly and ethically.

There, I've said it. A minority within these communities are incapable of acting responsibly and ethically. Drunkenness, drug addiction, gang violence, prostitution, pimping, promiscuity, gunplay, knifings, random and callous violence and disregard for other people. A complete and total absence of empathy, a colossal laziness, a swamping greed, a muddy contempt for the efforts and sacrifices of others and a glutinous stupidity.

The notion that a sports facility or a drop-in centre will prevent a young man from becoming a murderer is tenuous at best, insulting and lethal at worst. It's not public money but private values that give people stability and make them decent.

Which is where we have to expose those chatterers who obsess about social programs. These same types of people have campaigned since the 1960s against the very morality and standards that held this country together and gave it a righteous decorum.

These virtues were old-fashioned, we were told, as well as boring and dull. Hard-working fathers who sacrificed and remained faithful and present were archaic. Marriage was dead, fidelity confining and respect for tradition and law a thing of the past. The damage done was extraordinary.

There were always criminals and there was always crime, but nothing like today. Gangsters killed for money. Now they kill for fun. There were sacred areas. Now the whole nation is a killing field. There were families. Now there is breeding.

Yes, it stings when we hear the truth. Thirty-year-old women with teenage sons and neither of them having any idea who the father might be. Mothers with four children from different men. Or parents teaching their kids how to drink and encouraging them to become dependent on narcotics as well as the state.

I'm tired of the excuses and the lies. It's partly but not completely about race and it's partly but not completely about poverty. It's about those who are willing to join society and those who are not. It's time that as Christians we in particular asked the questions and gave the answers that others are frightened of even considering.

Michael Coren's website is www.michaelcoren.com.

Finding the Holy Spirit in the community

A church on the perpetual verge of extinction reaches out to its neighbours

BY ST. ANDREW'S, SUTTON, ONT.

What's for dinner?

Can someone please put the salt on the table?

Is the tea made? When will the coffee be ready?

Who is on "dishes"?

Sounds like home ... the chaos around the dinner table. It's also a taste of heaven, the body of Christ, in action. It's the community dinner at St. Andrew's, Sutton, Ont., on Tuesday night. Every Tuesday night, rain or shine, summer or winter.

It all began with dinner, common enough, routine and necessary. Some of us in the congregation wanted to help our community to share our good fortune, our recipes and good cooking. Some of us wanted to get to know our neighbours. Some of us wanted to share dinner together.

Who is my neighbour? Who is my family? Who is my community?

My neighbour is the middle-aged woman, recently widowed, who cooks. My neighbour is the elderly couple without a car who bake pies for dessert.

My family are the students from the local high school who help serve dinner. My family is the little girl skipping around the church basement.

My community is a mom with two little ones in the stroller and one on the way. My community is a young man recently out of prison.

We share the meal, we share our stories, we share the disappointment of struggles in our lives, we share the blessings and joys of the seasons of life. We laugh, we cry, we praise the cooks. We remember Jesus saying "Love the Lord your God with all your heart your soul and your mind, and love your neighbour as yourself."



Every Tuesday, come rain or shine, summer or winter, the community meal at St. Andrew's, Sutton, Ont., is served for the community.



What is for dinner? Sounds like home. We are in the presence of the Spirit.

– Rachael Green-Enkel

Our deaf church was going to be closed soon. My husband, Harry and I, (both of us are deaf) also had a call from the Lord to find another church. We had a very hard decision about which church to join as there were no sign language interpreters or deaf pastor who can sign.

I decided to go for a walk in a peaceful park to talk to the Lord for guidance. In frustration, I yelled in my mind at the Lord, "Show me a sign! Which church?!" A few minutes later, Pastor Jim Young walked his dog past me. We said a short hello to each other and moved on. I recognized him from St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church that we visited on Christmas Eve last year. I asked the Lord "Is this the sign?" Yes!

I spoke with my friend Kathy Russell about seeing Young as the sign. Kathy goes to his church. We discussed how the church can serve deaf people. We got the idea of using a computer and having somebody type what the pastor was saying and the hymns, so that we could follow on a screen.

We started going to St. Andrew's along with three deaf people. We sign the song along with the hearing people who are singing and listen to the sermon while looking at the computer screen. We feel the sense of belonging as the people welcome us warmly.

For the last three years we also have our own Bible study for the deaf in our home. The deaf people learn so much about God through sign language and enjoy signing songs together. We also have tea and goodies, of course! It grew to 10 people with eight children. I have seen some changes in these deaf people spiritually. Praise the Lord!

– Suzanne Lambert

After I arrived at St. Andrew's, in 2001, it became obvious that the congregation was tired of working to keep the doors open. Indeed, it could be said that the

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It takes many hands to make light work. St. Andrew's congregation has grown closer through their weekly community meals and other mission work.

congregation had been on life-support for some time. Worship was routine, dull. There was no plan for the future; there was no one natural or supernatural to expect hope from; there was no purpose for being. Was it time to switch off the ventilator? A visioning group came together to search for alternatives. Plans were made, a prayer and praise time started on Thursday evenings. Suzanne Lambert and her group joined our congregation. Worship became joyful. As the congregation reached out to each other, it began to breathe on its own and the Holy Spirit became free to encourage and lead.

Session wondered if we had enough people to produce a community meal each Tuesday evening. Twenty people turned up at the organizational meeting. Some people actually came to be fed! Wow! Now there are 60 to 70 that come each week. However, we are a small congregation just off of life support. Some of us do not support the meal—some think the people who come should be working, and so forth. Someone hoped that "these" people should not be allowed into the sanctuary! My, my, my! Change is incredibly tough in smaller, older congregations. Or … should I simply say, in the church. The street people (yes, we have them in Sutton) used to ask me for my change. Now they also stop to talk. One of them even asked for prayer.

The street people used to ask me for my change. Now they also stop to talk. One of them even asked for prayer

We are helped by the community with our efforts on Tuesday evenings. However, the sad truth is that St. Andrew's will come to the end of its financial resources next year. The Presbytery of Oak Ridges has been asked to help but it has financial commitments to other churches. Will St. Andrew's live or die in Jesus Christ? Isn't St. Andrew's like but unlike 80 per cent of the congregations in our denomination across Canada? If you would support our ministry through your prayers we would be grateful.

– Rev. Jim Young

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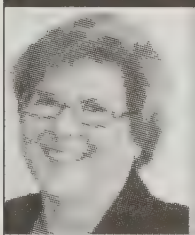
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Words pierce like a sword

The inspiring story of how a 90-pound weakling was amazed by God

I was a skinny child. So skinny that I had only one vertical stripe on my pajamas. So skinny that I was swimming in a lake one summer and a dog came out to fetch me—three times. My mother used to scrub laundry on my rib cage. People looking for a toothpick at the dinner table would grab me. You get the picture.

I wasn't a particularly bad-looking child but I was uncommonly thin, and it took me years to discover any humour in it.

I remember as if it were an hour ago the time a beautiful girl in our school rode past me on her silver bicycle and shouted, "Hi Skinny!" as if that were my given name. I would rather she had leveled a potato gun at me and pulled the trigger.

I suppose I became a writer partly as a response to the enormous humiliation of being teased as a child. A sense of humour and my ability with words were the only weapons I had in my arsenal. So I kept my wit sharp and my tongue forked.

In elementary school a classmate broke my thumb with a hockey stick, then laughed as I cried. His name was Ken, but I called him other things, things I'm not proud of, things involving his family history and his future. As he sulked away I realized that sticks and stones can break bones, but words can shatter something far deeper.



'Callaway, you're so skinny we should slide you under the door when we need stuff'

In high school an upper classman named Larry approached me in the hallway and said, "Callaway, you're so skinny we should slide you under the door when we need stuff." I couldn't think of a gracious response, so I said, "Well, you're so fat you broke your family tree!" He was stunned. I was on a terrible roll. I said, "You're so fat when you bend over you cause an eclipse on three continents."

I thought he would murder me and the jury would unanimously acquit him. Instead the colour drained from his face as he turned and walked away.

That same year I discovered writing. I was about 90 pounds at the time, which was just enough to make the keys on the typewriter go down. My first critical review came from classmates in response to my essay, "A Day in the Life of an English Student." I believe the teacher's reason for reading it publicly was to humiliate me. To show the class that using his name in an assignment was improper. That ridiculing his teaching habits would not go unpunished. It backfired big time. The students clapped. They cheered. They loved me. A few rose to their feet. The teacher stopped reading and wrote "D" across my essay in red ink. "Composition poor. Grammar bad. See me after school."

As I sat in my desk that afternoon I began to dream. Of the day Ken and Larry would beg forgiveness for not treating me better. Of writing hugely successful fiction jammed with mystery, humour, sarcasm and revenge.

Two things stood in the way: A praying mother. And a father who promised me a watch if I read one chapter of Proverbs each day for a month. I began to encounter verses like, "Reckless words pierce like a sword," (12:18) and "The tongue that brings healing is a tree of life." (15:4)

I was speaking about God's grace at a large convention recently and when I stepped off the stage, guess who was waiting for me? Ken. I kid you not. He gave me a bear hug until my ribs squeaked. There were tears streaming down his face. Ten minutes later Larry elbowed his way through a group of people and opened his arms. I kid you not. Tears were in his eyes. They were in mine too. The three of us standing together. Amazed by grace. On even ground at the foot of the cross.

"Isn't God good?" said Ken, taking my right hand and squeezing it hard. "How's the thumb?" he asked. "Never better," I said. "Never better."

Phil is a popular speaker and a best-selling author. Visit him at www.philcallaway.com

Messing up the picture

This sin-crinkled life of mine is imperfect without Christ

BY DAVID WEBBER



PHOTO: DAVID WEBBER

Last summer while camping at Horn Lake in the Chilcotin, I dragged myself out of bed at dawn to go and photograph Whitesaddle and Blackhorn mountains. This pair of spectacular peaks tower to 3,000 metres above sea level. The early morning sun spotlighted the peaks perfectly and the lake was absolutely calm leaving a stunning mirror image on its surface.

I gingerly stepped into my boat with all the good intentions of taking the perfect picture but even this slight disturbance placed a ripple on the water. I gently paddled, trying to negotiate the boat out to a vantage point in the middle of the lake. The more I tried to be careful, the more waves I put on the water. I was ruining the smooth lake surface and the effect of the reflected picture I was after.

When I got out to the middle of the lake, I decided that the only solution was to sit absolutely still in the boat and let the water completely calm down. I had been practicing goofing off for better than two weeks so waiting wasn't a problem. I had all morning if necessary and it was barely past dawn. I watched as my waves slowly worked themselves to the shore. When they got there they ricocheted off the shore and slowly rippled their way back to the centre and then to the opposite shore and back. As long as I waited, about an hour I suppose, the lake never calmed down from my intrusion to the point of a perfect reflected picture. It seemed like the perfect picture was crinkled forever and I had no lake iron to straighten it out. Frustrated with my inability to do anything, I cranked the outboard and roared down the lake, completely slaying any remaining calmness on its surface as well as the perfect silence of the morning. Later in the day I began to reflect about the wave-wrinkled distorted picture and about sin and about me.

A long time ago I came to know myself as one who had sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. This terrible realization resulted in me responding to

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It is the risen Christ who is the antidote for all the sin ripples that distort the picture of my life

God's yes in Christ with a yes from my own heart, to God. For a long time, that was about the extent of it. I had accepted Christ, bought my fire insurance so to speak and all was well with my soul. It seemed like sin was almost past tense. It is only in the more recent years that I have begun to appreciate the present tense of sin and how pervasive sin is in my life. The longer in the tooth I get, both in terms of age and faith, the more I seem to become aware of sin's distortion in me.

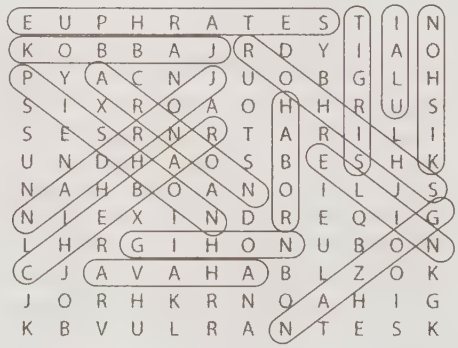
This geriatric holiness movement of mine has proved most interesting. I have discovered sin is not something I can simply give up like I did smoking a few years back. Sin seems to be in my life like the ripples on Horn Lake. It just seems to continue to move back and forth across the surface of my being, causing the most damning wavy distortions. And try as I might, I just can't seem to iron it out, at least not perfectly. I hate sin, I really do. And yet I can't seem to stop being a sinner. Together with the Apostle Paul: "I realize that I don't have what it takes. I decide to do good, but I don't really do it; I decide not to do bad, but then I do it anyway. My decisions, such as they are, don't result in actions. Something has gone wrong deep within me and gets the better of me every time. It happens so regularly that it's predictable. The moment I decide to do good, sin is there to trip me up." (Rom 7:18-21)

"Something has gone wrong deep within me …." That's how pervasive sin is in me. It has become part of the wavy, rippled picture that is my life and I don't seem to have the iron that will take out the wrinkles completely. This pervasiveness of sin is what good Calvinists understand as a result of the Fall; a condition theologically termed total depravity, and God, along with just about everyone else who knows me, knows full well that I am fallen and depraved.

We are in the midst of March. Lent is ending and I'm anticipating Easter. It is a time when I wonder a lot about my life and the sin that seems so entwined in my being. George Whitefield at the age of 16 became deeply convicted of sin. He tried everything possible to erase his guilt through religious activity. He wrote, "I fasted for 36 hours twice a week. I prayed formal prayers several times a day and almost starved myself to death during Lent, but only felt more miserable." Serious self-flagellation of any kind is not of much use to me in dealing with sin. I say this because of the insight that I can do little or nothing about ironing the sin-rippled distortion from the picture that is my life.

But the Risen Christ can. Listen to the Apostle again: "I truly delight in God's commands, but it's pretty obvious that not all of me joins in that delight. Parts of me covertly rebel, and just when I least expect it, they take charge. I've tried everything and nothing helps. I'm at the end of my rope. Is there no one who can do anything for me? Isn't that the real question? The answer, thank God, is that Jesus Christ can and does. He acted to set things right in this life of contradictions where I want to serve God with all my heart and mind, but am pulled by the influence of sin to do something totally different." (Romans 7:22-25) In this sin-crinkled life of mine it turns out God has the iron. It is the risen Christ who is the antidote for all the sin ripples that distort the picture of my life. Hallelujah! It's Easter.

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Rev. David Webber is a contributing editor to the *Record*. He is a minister of the Cariboo, B.C. house church ministry. His most recent book is *Like a Winter's Aspen: Embracing the Creator's Fire.*

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ALLEN, Lloyd, faithful member and elder since 1958 at Mt. Pleasant, Ont. A choir member for over 60 years, he passed away on January 18, 2006.

BAGLEY, Robert, aged 61 and member of First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont. Also member of the Property and Finance Committee.

BURNS, Sarah, aged 64 and member of First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont.

CARR, Art, aged 59 and member of First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont.

COLEBROOK, Edward, aged 86 and long time member of First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont.

DONAHUE, The Rev. Lee Stephen, beloved husband of Lillian (Lancaster) (Yeoman) Donahue and the late Miriam "Mimi" (Dean) Donahue, passed away peacefully on January 9, 2006 at London Health Sciences Centre, Victoria Hospital, London, Ont. in his 88th year following a courageous battle with cancer. Lee is survived by his sister-in-law Joan (Martin) Fiala of Redstone, Colorado, USA. Loving father of Russell (Marlene) Donahue of Calgary, Alta.; Ellen (Ross) Donahue-Ingraham of Ingonish, N.S.; Barbara Donahue of Victoria, B.C.; Nancy (John) Harmon of Queenstown, N.B.; and Stephen (Leta) Donahue of Montreal, Que. Also loved by his fifteen grandchildren and by his four great-children.

KENNEDY, The Rev. Duncan, died on January 4, 2006 at his home. He was recently inducted as the minister of St. Andrew's, Maxville; Knox, Moose Creek and Gordon, St. Elmo, Ont.

KLOPFER, Edna, aged 91 and a 70 year member of First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont.

KYLE, Grace, aged 83 and member of First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont.

MACINNES, Leila Muriel (nee Goltz), passed away peacefully on January 16, 2006, in St. Catharines, Ont. in her 90th year. Leila was predeceased by her beloved husband Rev. P. Gordon MacInnes and infant son Peter and all of her twelve siblings. She was a very caring mother, grandmother, sister (in-law), aunt and friend to all whose lives she touched. Survived by Brian and Carol Anne, Ajax, Ont., and grandsons Scott, Andrew and Graeme MacInnes; Nancy (MacInnes) and Jim Gallacher, Fonthill, Ont., and family Michelle, Ajay and Sarah Gallacher, Sonny Xu; Michael and Amanda Gallacher; Ruth (Gallacher), Jim, Joshua and Cameron Thorpe. She was born in Bracebridge, Ont. and with husband Gordon served Presbyterian Church congregations in Assiniboia, Sask., Elora, Ont., Smiths Falls, Ont., Chippawa, Ont. and Toronto. Leila served the Presbyterian Church in Canada in so many ways and with love and affection. Before her retirement in 1983, she held the position of Circulation Manager at the Presbyterian Record.

MACKINNON, The Rev. Dr. Wallace, aged 91 passed away January 20, 2006, in Maxville, Ont., his home town to which he retired some years ago. He was minister of Greenock Church, St. Andrews, N.B., from July 31, 1956 to January 28, 1964 and also served as clerk/treasurer of the Presbytery of St. John, N.B. from June 20, 1957 to February 7, 1962.

MAST, Helen Beatrice (Bea), aged 77 passed away on November 24, 2005. Elder and long time active member of Knox Presbyterian Church, Crieff, Ont.

NEKRASSOFF, Dorothy (nee Lukes), aged 77, retired member, Order of Diaconal Ministries and active elder at Parkwood Church, Ottawa, Ont. from 1974 until her call to higher service January 16, 2006. Born in Midland, Ont. Dorothy taught school, graduated from the Missionary and Deaconess Training School, 1957, served with the W.M.S. as Port Receptionist, Montreal, Que., 1957-1964, welcoming new immigrants and teaching English and subsequently for many years aided teenagers with the Children's Aid Society in Ottawa; she continued active in retirement as Secretary for the Pastoral Care Team, Parkwood Church and also for the Board of Directors, CanHave Children's Centre aiding AIDS orphans in Uganda.

PATON, Gordon, suddenly on December 15, 2005. Most faithful and active member of Duff Church, Dutton, Ont. Elder for more than 20 years. Missed by all. "One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the House of the Lord all the days of my life." (Psalm 27:4)

RONSON, Harry, aged 101 and long time member of First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont.

SHANTZ, The Rev. Dr. Howard L., B.A., M.A., D. Min. passed away on January 17, 2006. Dr. Shantz was born in Jebba, Nigeria, West Africa, to missionary parents, the late Rev. and Mrs. S. S. Shantz of New Dundee, Ont., a minister of the Missionary Church in Canada. He is survived by his wife Gwendolyne Helen (Tranmer) Shantz of 60 and one-half years, daughters Janet Marie (Shantz) Congo, wife of Dr. David Congo of California and Gwenne Elizabeth (Shantz) Bilas, wife of Mr. Daniel Bilas of Toronto, Ont., grandchildren Christopher, Amy, Dickens and great granddaughter Sage. He is also survived by his sister Dorothy (Shantz) Grover of New York and predeceased by his brother Roy, late of Thorold, Ont. and an infant brother. A nephew Paul Shantz resides in Toronto along with several cousins in New Dundee and Mississauga, Ont. Dr. Shantz served in the Presbyterian Church in Canada for the last 38 years as minister at Pine Ridge Presbyterian Church and St. James Presbyterian Church and in the Missionary Church for 16 years. In 1980 he was elected Moderator for the West Toronto Presbytery. During his ministry in Toronto, he served 13 times as an Interim Moderator for Presbytery for clergy placement in varied churches throughout Ontario. Dr. Shantz graduated Knox College, University of Toronto and completed a Master's degree in Jerusalem, Israel and a Doctor of Ministry degree in Pasadena, California at Fuller Theological Seminary at the age of 65. He studied and became an Interim Specialist and Consultant at the Alban Institute, Washington, D.C. To broaden his base, he completed additional studies in Strategies In Crisis Intervention at Fuller School of Theology. Since 1976, he served the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 101 as their Chaplain. "The Lord is my Shepherd I shall not want." (Psalm 23)

STONE, Sarah Margaret (nee Cairnduff), was born in Bokgnohinch, Northern Ireland on October 31, 1921 and passed away in Orillia, Ont., December 23, 2005 surrounded by the love and care of her family. Sarah was the beloved wife of the late Pastor J. Mark Stone, both faithful servants at the Presbyterian Church in Canada. A marital mix of the north and south of Ireland, they jointly ministered to the congregations of Uptergrove, Essen, Jarratt, Hillsdale, Craighurst, Moonstone, Deseronto and Cameden East, Ont., through the years 1958 to 1973. Their legacy is seven children, twenty grandchildren, two great grandchildren and the many parishioners blessed by their ministry.

WALES, James LeRoy, died May 31, 2005 at the age of 75. Jim was born and raised in Leamington, Ont. He came to Everett, Ont. in 1946 as a young adult of 16 and with his family began to grow tobacco. He met his wife to be Mary (Haza) in Everett; they were married in 1959 and became a farming family; blessed with three children Peter, Paul & Mary Margaret and six grandchildren. Jim would spend a total of 34 years in municipal politics as councillor and reeve of what was then known as Tosorontio, Ont., and later mayor of what was to become Adjala/Tosorontio, Ont. He was warden of Simcoe County, Chair of the Board of Governors of Stevenson Memorial Hospital, Chair of the Board of Governors of Georgian College (Barrie), Deputy Fire Chief of the Everett Fire Dept. (27 years), past Master of 7 Star Masonic Lodge, member of the Barrie Shriners and a much loved member and elder of Knox Church, Alliston, Ont. for 42 years.

YOUNG, Olive, aged 84 and long time member of First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont.

Oysters, pearls and irritation

Joan Chittister's anger is neither dimmed nor quenched

BY LEE MCKENNA DU CHARME

In the Heart of the Temple: My Spiritual Vision for Today's World
Joan Chittister
Bluebridge Books

Joan Chittister, feminist, Roman Catholic religious and passionate Benedictine, has been railing against her church and its patriarchal traditions and practice for a long time. Her writing has provided comfort and inspiration to women of all Christian denominations who grow weary. Her 30-plus books display an ardent devotion to a Christianity that is on the side of the poor, in harmony with creation, non-violent, non-hierarchical, inclusive, egalitarian and feminist. Yet she lives and works within an ecclesiastical tradition that has over its history, she continually notes with chagrin, embraced the polar opposite: wealth, power, violence, sexism, totalitarianism, exclusion and exploitation.



This is a collection of Sister Chittister's essays drawn from speeches, lectures and writings over a 14-year period beginning in 1989. In his forward, the Lutheran scholar and essayist Martin Marty recalls the broader context for these writings, which is her life: that of an impatient, irritable and irritating young religious, who "expected Christians to fly," whose first visit to Rome in the years immediately following Vatican II resulted in what she thought was the loss of her faith, who metamorphosed into the Joan of her later years, less idealistic, more mature in her struggles with disappointment and pain, more tempered by hope. These essays track some of that change that she would not call mellowing, but she might call wisdom or maturity.

This is not to say that the fires of her anger are dimmed or quenched. On the contrary. Though Marty reminds the reader that she is Catholic with a capital C, "of the Roman obedience," it is not a stupefying submission but, more often than not, a "holy disobedience" that marks her words and work. Why? Because so much of what calls itself Christian is "more fancy than fact" strayed so far from the life and message of Jesus as to be unrecognizable.

Rather than standing as beacons to a different way, churches are joining the corporate pack, taking up the language and ethos of the marketplace where the highest values are efficiency and profitability, where everything is commodified, and, in the process, destroyed, violated, disposed.

She rebukes us for our collusion in work that enslaves others in sweatshops and kitchens and ourselves in assembly lines and office cubicles; for a definition of success that is measured only in upward mobility, salary scales and stuff. She laments the resultant loss of Sabbath, the very concept of Sabbath and its economy of just enough.

Chittister writes elsewhere that if spirituality is not feminist, it cannot claim to be Christian. This collection of essays continues that theme in the areas of language, whether referring to humankind or the Godhead, economics and work, office and authority. "If God is male, then males are, indeed, closer to God. Femaleness then becomes the undivine other, the leftover, the unknown, the unholy, the addenda. And, of course, the subordinate." God as male, she argues, is bad biology, worse theology; maleness is idolatry.

"Every act of power," she writes, "is either exploitative, competitive, manipulative, integrative or nurturing." She decries power used to destroy another, to defeat and control, to suppress dissent, power used to protect the church from feminine pronouns and feminine voices. "System is simply no substitute for the gospel," she writes against a spirituality of power whose God is system, where the criteria for fidelity are about obedience over truth and a unity based on silence rather than values held in common. She realizes she is speaking not only for Roman Catholic women, but for women in other denominations who, despite admission into ordination and higher office, experience themselves as tokens.

Hope, Chittister tells us, is found in small places and in the scattered turbulences of the questioning, the agitated, the oppressed and the dissatisfied invisible. Hope for her is like an oyster that defends itself by excreting a protective substance that turns eventually into the beauty of a pearl. In the process, the oyster becomes more valuable. This, she calls the ministry of irritation. Irritate away; Jesus modelled it; God demands it; the world needs it. Following Jesus, she writes, "is to follow the one who turns the world upside down, even (perhaps especially) the religious world."

Lee McKenna du Charme is an organizer in the health care sector and a graduate of Knox College.

From Abner's store to praise bands

The Presbytery of Oak Ridges grows in numbers and mission

BY AMY MACLACHLAN

Flanking the ever-growing Yonge St. corridor, northeast of Toronto, Oak Ridges presbytery is an anomaly in the Presbyterian church. "I think we're in a growth mode," said Rev. Sam Priestley, minister at St. Andrew's, Markham. "Many communities have a large number of young families and couples moving in, and we endeavour to minister to them."

Retirees, hoping to escape the city's frenzy, are adding to the growth. Two years ago the presbytery gained 103 adherents (for a total of 3,082 members). All of its congregations stand on their own, and only one of the 21 charges lies completely vacant (although several are staffed with student or interim ministers or led by associate ministers).

St. Andrew's, Markham, can trace its roots to the "saddlebag ministers" who travelled to farms and communities on horseback prior to 1827. Once a month volunteers make 12 loaves of sandwiches for Toronto's Evangel Hall.





Above: Laura and Helen Smith, Marlene Peck and Rev. Heather Jones of Thornhill share their stories of Malawi. Below: the Thornhill youth group prepares food for a community dinner at Toronto's Evangel Hall.

The congregation also has a minister of new development and a director of youth ministry. The huge growth in the district is too much for one minister to carry. A team ministry is needed to forge and nurture relationships.

Thornhill Church was established in 1849. After growing substantially since that time, congregation size has settled at about 250 members (with 125 in attendance) and 30 kids in church school.

The monthly dinner and movie night features a homemade meal, fellowship and discussion following movies like *Hotel Rwanda, Bruce Almighty* and *The Gods Must be Crazy*. Participants discuss how God and faith are presented in popular culture.

The church's social justice group keeps the congregation apprised of current issues and campaigns. It recently spearheaded an initiative to promote fair trade coffee. And thanks to a grant from the presbytery's youth ministry committee, the church owns floor hockey equipment which the members use for inter-generational hockey games at the church. Thornhill has also taken on a project linking the congregation to a mission in Malawi. Members sent a shipment of learn-to-read books to Ekwendeni Hospital and are raising money to build a daycare centre for the hospital's orphan care program. They also hold a community outreach luncheon for seniors twice monthly, where 40-60 seniors gather to listen to a guest speaker and to eat together.

Thornhill's Rev. Heather Jones said although the church sits in an affluent neighbourhood, there are pockets of low-income housing. "There are significant needs right on our doorstep, right in our community," she said, "and we're struggling with how to reach out, provide service and support, and to integrate them into our community of faith."

St. Andrew's, Newmarket, was formed in 1874. It is a hub of activity, with presbytery-wide events, educational workshops and outreach to children and families. Their Sunday school sometimes uses a learning centre model, where they recently completed a six-week unit on HIV/AIDS. One of the centres involved creating a model African village. "About 10 children returned week after week to work on the village," said Dorothy Henderson, a di-

aconal minister and associate secretary for ministry with children, families and youth at the national church. "That was their passion. Others tended to move around to the sewing centre, art centre and puzzle centre. They will never forget that experience, I'm sure."

The presbytery's mission committee held a Young Faces of Mission event last fall at St. Andrew's. Despite miserable weather, seven young adults shared their mission stories with more than 100 participants. "I was delighted to hear a young person say, 'I really got what people were saying...they started out thinking they could change the world, but ended up being changed themselves,'" said Henderson, whose husband John is the minister of St. Andrew's. "It was so encouraging to see the work done by such young people."

St. Andrew's donated $40,000 to Presbyterian World Service and Development last year, collected carloads of clothing and toiletries for Evangel Hall and gave $7,000 to Canadian Foodgrains Bank thanks to a local growing project. They also hosted an In From the Cold program.

The presbytery has also planted a church at Keswick, and has $150,000 ready to start a building project. "The presbytery works together that way," said John Henderson, who is also clerk of presbytery.

New buildings are common in Oak Ridges. Woodbridge was established in 1874, dedicated in 1877. Currently the congregation is worshipping in a high school while awaiting their new building.

Rev. David Sherbino, minister at Woodbridge and a professor at Tyndale University, watched the congregation teeter towards closure when he arrived 10 years ago. Now it is a growing and developing church with about 145 people on Sunday. "One of the exciting aspects of our church life is the missional focus we emphasize," said Sherbino. "A number of our congregation members have served in various mission ventures and this year 13 from the congregation will spend three weeks in Malawi working on a project that supports AIDS orphans.

"It is our intention to not focus solely on ourselves and the demands of a multi-million-dollar building project but to see the bigger picture and the work of the kingdom."

As for growth, Markham Chinese has already built and paid for the first phase of its building and is starting the second, and St. John's, Bradford, just moved and built a new sanctuary.

Chapel Place, Markham, was founded in the 1970s and was the first Arabic congregation in the PCC. Today it has Arabic and English services, with the English congregation growing after moving to its own building in 1991. One of the church's main aims is to minister to and provide pastoral care to the Arabic-speaking community in the Toronto area, and to equip them to minister to their families and communities beyond the congregation's reach. The congregation is currently about 200-strong, and they recently inducted a new minister.

Homesteading Presbyterians, dating back to 1820, gave rise to Caven, Bolton. Today, there are many groups to get involved in—two youth groups, a women's fellowship, Vacation Bible School (which welcomed 60 kids last year), an extensive church library (with its own librarian), Alpha and various committees. The website will soon have sermons available to download, and currently offers daily devotions and a children's page with educational online games and activities.

St. Andrew's, Beeton, hosts community dinners to raise money for local causes, while Keswick Church (known as "Kespres" to members) holds several annual fundraisers, including a golf tournament and barbeque. Keswick offers worships that blends the traditional with the contemporary, and they mail information packets to visitors, or to those simply wanting to know more about the church before attending. Unionville (which was forced to close after church union in 1925 but was reopened in 1990) offers numerous opportunities to get involved, including line-dancing classes. Members also collect stamps for Leprosy Mission Canada, and deliver sandwiches and other supplies to Evangel Hall twice a month.

Richmond Hill Church has numerous annual events—including a pancake breakfast, big-band night, barbeques and participation in the community's heritage day—and offers Bible studies, youth groups, several women's groups, Scottish country dancing classes and a Religion-In-Life course for Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, who can earn a badge for their studies.

The congregation is one of the oldest in York County, and its Sunday school, which began meeting in 1811 in a log schoolhouse, is the second oldest in Ontario. The church's official beginning is noted as 1817, when parishioners met in Abner Miles' store and tavern. The first frame church was built in 1821 on land given by Abner Miles' son, James. The Miles' family burial ground also became part of the church site. Abner's 1806 grave marker is the cemetery's oldest.

"I was delighted to hear a young person say, 'I really got what people were saying ... they started out thinking they could change the world, but ended up being changed themselves' "

In order to educate and support both the ministers and the congregations the presbytery will be holding an instructional weekend this month on how to add a praise band to worship. This continues the presbytery efforts, that include workshops on *Leading With Care* and developing active youth programs.

The Presbytery of Oak Ridges will continue to reach out to visitors, nurture its members and support meaningful ministries, but as communities on the immediate outskirts of Toronto continue to burst at the seams, one wonders if even more can be done. "The challenge is, how do you grow?" asked John Henderson, although he says the presbytery is a healthy one. "I'm living in a community that has grown by leaps and bounds, but the church has not kept pace—and it's not only in Newmarket, but all over."

called to wonder

CREATED BY JENNIFER O'FARRELL

*A person's thoughts are like **water** in a deep well, but someone with insight can draw them out.* (Proverbs 20:5)

WATER IS FOR LIFE - WATER IS FOR ETERNAL LIFE

CLUES for the word search

1. Ezra 8:21 _____
2. Deuteronomy 2:36 _____
3. Ezekiel 1:1 _____
4. Genesis 2:14b _____
5. Genesis 2:13 _____
6. 1 Chronicles 5:26 _____
7. 2 Kings 18:11 _____
8. Deuteronomy 2:36 _____
9. Numbers 22:1 _____
10. Judges 4:7 _____
11. Genesis 41:17 _____
12. Genesis 2:11 _____
13. Joshua 13:2-3 _____
14. Genesis 2:14a _____
15. Daniel 8:16 _____

RIVERS of the BIBLE

E	U	P	H	R	A	T	E	S	T	I	N
K	O	B	B	A	J	R	D	Y	I	A	O
P	Y	A	C	N	J	U	O	B	G	L	H
S	I	X	R	O	A	O	H	H	R	U	S
S	E	S	R	N	R	T	A	R	I	L	I
U	N	D	H	A	O	S	B	E	S	H	K
N	A	H	B	O	A	N	O	I	L	J	S
N	I	E	X	I	N	D	R	E	Q	I	G
L	H	R	G	I	H	O	N	U	B	O	N
C	J	A	V	A	H	A	B	L	Z	O	K
J	O	R	H	K	R	N	O	A	H	I	G
K	B	V	U	L	R	A	N	T	E	S	K

*Finally hearing good news from a distant land is like a drink of cold **water** when you are dry and thirsty.* (Proverbs 25:25)

Water is precious!
A human can live more than a month without food but only as much as one week without water. Water is as important as any other nutrient in our daily diet. The human body is made up of about 75 per cent water because every cell of the body needs water. It helps lubricate joints, protect our organs and maintain normal body temperature.

Water is precious!
Leaving the water running while you brush your teeth is one example of a wasteful habit in most Canadian homes. The average faucet (even with a high efficiency aerator) uses several litres of water per minute. Instead, pour water into a cup, wet your toothbrush when you begin and rinse it in the cup when you finish. Use water wisely!

Water is precious!
In many parts of the world, people are unable to get (or afford) safe drinking water or basic water for common household tasks. For the water-related goals of the United Nations for the coming decade, look at: www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/ and for worldwide information on "valuing" water, refer to: www.unesco.org/water/wwap/facts_figures/mdgs.shtml

Water is precious!
Water revitalizes all living creatures. *Jesus said [to the woman of Samaria at the well], "Whoever drinks this water will get thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water that I will give, will never be thirsty again."* (John 4:13-14) In each believer, the Holy Spirit becomes "a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." Thanks be to God for the gift of water, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

*It is your own face that you see reflected in the **water** and it is your own self that you see in your heart.* (Proverbs 27:19)

Solution on page 40.

To report a vacancy for the next issue of the Record please contact: Deborah Leader
Tel: 1-800-619-7301 x308 Fax: 416.441.2825 E-mail: dleader@presbyterian.ca
All notices of pulpit vacancies will be charged to the congregation: $8 a line, $40 minimum for a one-time insertion or $25 per insertion for four or more insertions.

Ministry Opportunities and Interim Moderators

New Church Development positions available through Canada Ministries; Contact Rev. Gordon Haynes, Associate Secretary; 416-441-1111 extension 258 for more details.

Synod of the Atlantic Provinces

Sunny Corner Pastoral Charge, NB: St. Stephen's, Sunny Corner, St. Paul's, Warwick; Rev. H. Martyn Van Essen, 7 Hierlihy Rd., Tabusintac, NB E9H 1Y5; 506-779-1812; hmvanessen@hotmail.com.

Tatamagouche Pastoral Charge: Sedgwick Memorial, Tatamagouche, St. Matthew's, Wallace and St. John's, Pugwash; Interim-moderator Richard E. Sand, 37 Mountain Rd., New Glasgow, NS B2H 3K7; acersand@ns.sympatico.ca.

Thorburn and Sutherland's River, NS; Union; Interim Moderator Rev. E. M. Iona MacLean, PO Box 1003, Pictou, NS B0K 1H0; ionamac@eastlink.ca.

Woodstock, St. Paul's New Interim Moderator Rev. Robert Adams, 1991 Hwy. 640, Hanwell, NB E3C 1Z5

Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario

Howick, Georgetown; half time; Rev. Dr. Barry Mack, 496 Birch Ave., Saint-Lambert, QC J4P 2M8; 450-671-1862; standrews@standrews-stlambert.ca.

Inverness, co-operative with the United Church, 3-point charge; a three-quarter time position and knowledge of French would be an asset; Rev. J. B. Forsyth, 585 Principale sud, Waterville, QC J0B 3H0; 819-837-1475; jbfor@netrevolution.com.

Montreal, Chinese; Rev. J.S.S. Armour, 101 Creswell Dr., Beaconsfield, QC H9W 1E1; 514-426-4688; jss@magma.ca.

Montreal, Taiwanese Robert Campbell Memorial; Rev. Dr. Bill Klempa, 155 Lac Louisa Rd. N., Wentworth, QC J8H 3W8; 450-533-5321; wklemp@po-box.mcgill.ca.

Montreal, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Pierrefonds; Dr. J. Vissers, 3495 University St., Montreal, QC H3A 2A8; 514-288-5256 ext. 201; jvissers@presbyteriancollege.ca.

Ottawa, St. Giles; Rev. Andrew Johnston, Interim Moderator; St. Andrew's, 82 Kent St., Ottawa, ON K1P 5N9; 613-232-9042; aj@standrewsottawa.ca.

Pincourt, QC, Ile Perrot; David Morris, Convener, Search Committee, 242 Fifth Ave., Pincourt, QC J7V 5L3; 514-453-4378; dafydd.rich@sympatico.ca.

Vankleek Hill, Knox; Hawkesbury, St. Paul's; Rev. Ian MacMillan, RR 2, Cornwall, ON K6H 5R6; 613-931-2545; a3100@glen-net.ca.

Synod of Toronto and Kingston

Belleville, St. Columba; Rev. Katherine McCloskey, PO Box 118, Stirling, ON K0K 3E0; 613-395-5006; katherinejonah@hotmail.com.

Dunedin, Knox; Half-time position; Rev. Robert Graham, Interim Moderator; 160 King St. South, Alliston, ON L9R 1B9; 705-435-5081; robert.graham1@sympatico.ca.

Gananoque, St. Andrew's; The Rev. Lincoln Bryant, Interim Moderator; 130 Clergy St. E., Kingston, ON K7K 3S3; 613-546-6316; servant@kos.net.

Georgetown, Knox and Limehouse, Limehouse; Interim Moderator The Rev. Wes Denyer, 44 Church St. E., Brampton, ON L6V 1G3; 905-451-1723; wesdenyer@rogers.com.

Kitchener, St. Andrew's; Rev. Dr. Aubrey Botha, 7 Queens Square, Cambridge, ON N1S 1H4; 519-623-1080; aubreycentral@bellnet.ca.

Milton, Knox; Rev. Harry Klassen, 3065 Cawthra Rd., Mississauga, ON L5A 2X4; dixiepc@bellnet.ca.

Stayner, Jubilee; Sunnidale Corners, Zion; Rev. Keith Boyer; 27 Laurie Cres., Barrie, ON L4M 6C7; 705-735-9211; keb-cvb@sympatico.ca.

Thornhill, Thornhill Presbyterian; Rev. Barry Van Dusen, PO Box 264, Nobleton, ON L0G 1N0; 905-859-0843; barry.peggy.vandusen@sympatico.ca.

Thornton, Ivy; Half time call to ordained ministry; Interim Moderator Tom Cunningham, c/o Essa Road Presbyterian Church, 59 Essa Rd., Barrie, ON L4N 3K4; essard@rogers.com.

Toronto, Bridlewood; Rev. Graeme Illman, 765 Myrtle Rd. W., Ashburn, ON L0B 1A0; 905-655-8509; InterimModerator@bridlewoodpc.ca.

Toronto, Faith Community; Half time; Rev. Dr. Jim Czegledi, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, ON M3C 1J7; jczegledi@presbyterian.ca.

Toronto, Patterson; Rev. Zoltan Vass, 439 Vaughan Rd, Toronto, ON M6C 2P1; 416-656-1342

Toronto, St. Andrew's, Humber Heights; Rev. Garth Wilson, 155 Wychwood Ave., Toronto, ON M6C 2T1.

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The Church of St Andrew and St Paul

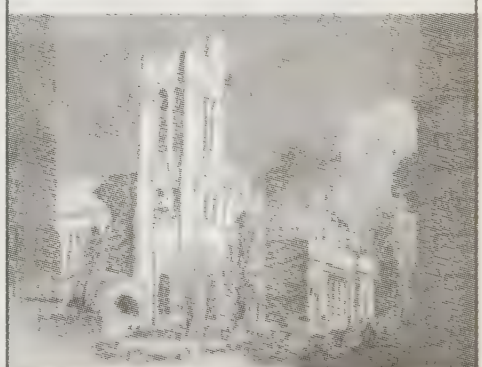
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Waterloo, Waterloo North; Rev. Calvin Brown; 5 Linda Dr., Cambridge, ON N3C 3W5; 519-651-2232; cbbrown@rogers.com.
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Chesley, Geneva Church; Rev. Dr. Alex McCombie, RR 3, Chesley, ON N0G 1L0; Phone: 519-363-5392; Fax: 519-363-0975
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London, Korean Christian; Mr. Sam Lim, 530 Topping Lane, London, ON N6J 3M7; Bus: 519-472-0360; Home: 519-681-3828 samlimca@yahoo.ca;
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Port Elgin, Tolmie Presbyterian Church and Burgoyne, Knox; Rev. Bill Vanderstelt, PO Box 280, Chatsworth, ON N0H 1G0; 519-794-0155; bvanderstelt@hotmail.com.
Windsor, Chinese Church; Half-time, Cantonese-speaking; Wendy Paterson, 3200 Woodland, Windsor, ON N9E 1Z5; 519-972-3627; paulinmemorial@on.aibn.com.
Windsor, St. Andrew's; Full-time minister; The Rev. Scott McAndless, Interim Moderator, c/o Knox Presbyterian Church, 58 Erie St. South, Leamington, ON N8H 3B1; 519-326-4541; scottmcandless@sympatico.ca.
Woodstock, Knox; Full-time Associate Minister; Rev. Mark Gaskin, 97 Wellington St., Brantford, ON N3T 2M1; Phone 519-752-4932; Fax 519-752-1846; cpc97@execulink.com.

St. Giles Church, Ottawa

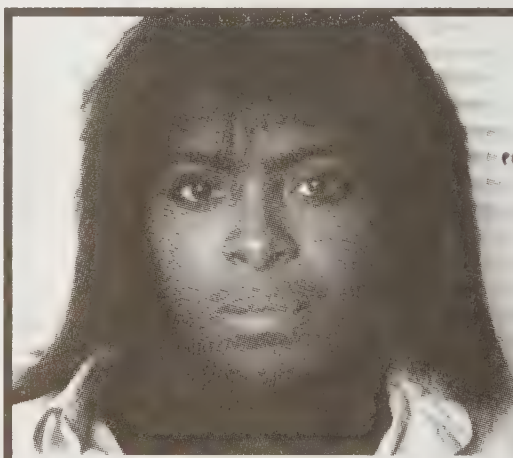


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Melfort, St. James; Tisdale, St. Andrew's; Rev. George Yando, 314-24th St. W, Prince Albert, SK S6V 4N1; 306-922-2718; geoyando@sasktel.net .

Saskatoon, Circle West; Parkview; Rev. Annabelle Wallace, 436 Spadina Cres. E, Saskatoon, SK S7K 3G6; 306-242-0525; standrews@sasktel.net.

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Lethbridge, AB, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church; Interim Moderator Rev. Frank Breisch, 1818 5th Ave. So, Lethbridge, AB T1J 0W6; andrewst@telusplanet.net.

St. Albert, AB, Braeside Presbyterian Church; Interim Moderator Rev. Harry Currie, 10025 105 St., Edmonton, AB T5J 1C8; hcurrie@incentre.net.

Synod of British Columbia

Slocan Valley, BC, St. Andrew's; Interim Moderator Rev. Dr. Leo E. Hughes; 250-226-7540; margrevleo@netidea.com.

Victoria, BC, Chinese (bi-lingual, English/Cantonese); Rev. H. McNabb, 760 Latoria Rd., Victoria, BC V9C 3A4; hamcnabb@shaw.ca.

Inductions, Ordinations and Recognitions

October 2, 2005 Induction of Rev. Frances Savill as minister of Richmond Presbyterian Church, Richmond BC

January 13, 2006 Induction of Rev. Dr. David Jones as minister of Calvin Presbyterian Church, North Bay ON

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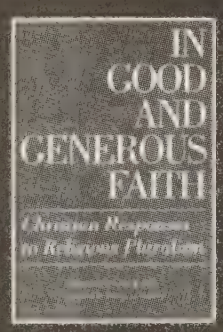
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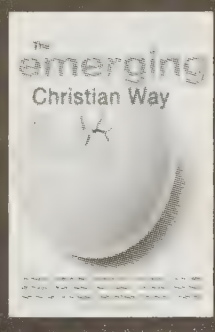
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Jean Morris



Weaving faith into their lives

Feasting on Christ in the midst of poverty

In January, Matthew and I spent a week in Guatemala, accompanied by Ken Kim, our church's missionary there. As well as setting the itinerary and making all the arrangements for our visit, Ken served as our translator, driver and interpreter of church and culture. Ken was an amazing host and colleague in ministry. Thanks be to God for his pastoral presence and wise counsel with the people of Guatemala on behalf of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. In and through his work, Ken is an expression of at least two of my moderatorial themes—ecumenism and non-parish-based ministries.

One of our days was spent with the Fraternidad De Presbiteriales Mayas, an organization of Mayan Christian women made up of societies and collectives of approximately 3,000 women from five different language groups. Their purpose is to promote spiritual, economic and social capacity inherent in the Mayan culture through integrated education services, training in health, technical assistance and strategic socio-development projects. The Presbyterian and United churches support the FDPM. Presbyterian World Service and Development has also committed funds for relief following Hurricane Stan, and the Women's Mission Society has provided money for projects. We visited two communities and were accompanied by Katarina, the director, Carmelina, who leads the biblical and theological education and Victor, the agronomist.

In the morning, we visited the community of Cajola where we met with about 30 indigenous women and children who expressed sincere gratitude for the support of the PCC. Loans are provided through the FDPM for small agricultural projects such as raising cows and developing compost to improve the quality of life for their families and the community. With excitement and confidence we were shown the cows and the women spoke to us about the empowerment they feel through the success of their projects and the new understanding they have of themselves as those made in the image of God. Mayan women have been marginalized for centuries due to their gender, race and poverty. The work of our church, in partnership with FDPM, is providing opportunity for transformation. The women spoke passionately about the transformation of their lives through biblical and theological reflection. The hospitality they provided was overwhelming. In abject poverty, we feasted. We feasted on traditional food they had prepared, the abundance of their faith in God, their overflowing gratitude and our shared faith in Jesus Christ.

From Cajola we went to Cantel where we met with Group Shalom, a collective comprised of seven Mayan women who receive micro-loans administered by FDPM. These women are weavers, traditional healers, farmers and one used the loan to help establish a small pharmacy in her village. Group Shalom has created a documented vision for their work, as well as establishing goals, objectives and processes of evaluation which increases their capacity for independence and improves quality of life. They are good stewards of the resources entrusted to them, and are most appreciative of the skills and accountabilities being encouraged by FDPM. While improvement of their current situation is foremost in their minds and hearts, they are also attentive to future opportunities for their children. They expressed deep appreciation for the support of the PCC and are grateful for the opportunities to recover the values of their Mayan culture within a reformed contextual theology. "Weaving is theology," was a profound statement we heard from one of the women and experienced throughout our stay at Cantel. Using and nurturing their God-given gifts to improve their lives and the life of their community, these women demonstrated an expression of faith that strengthened my own faith that day.



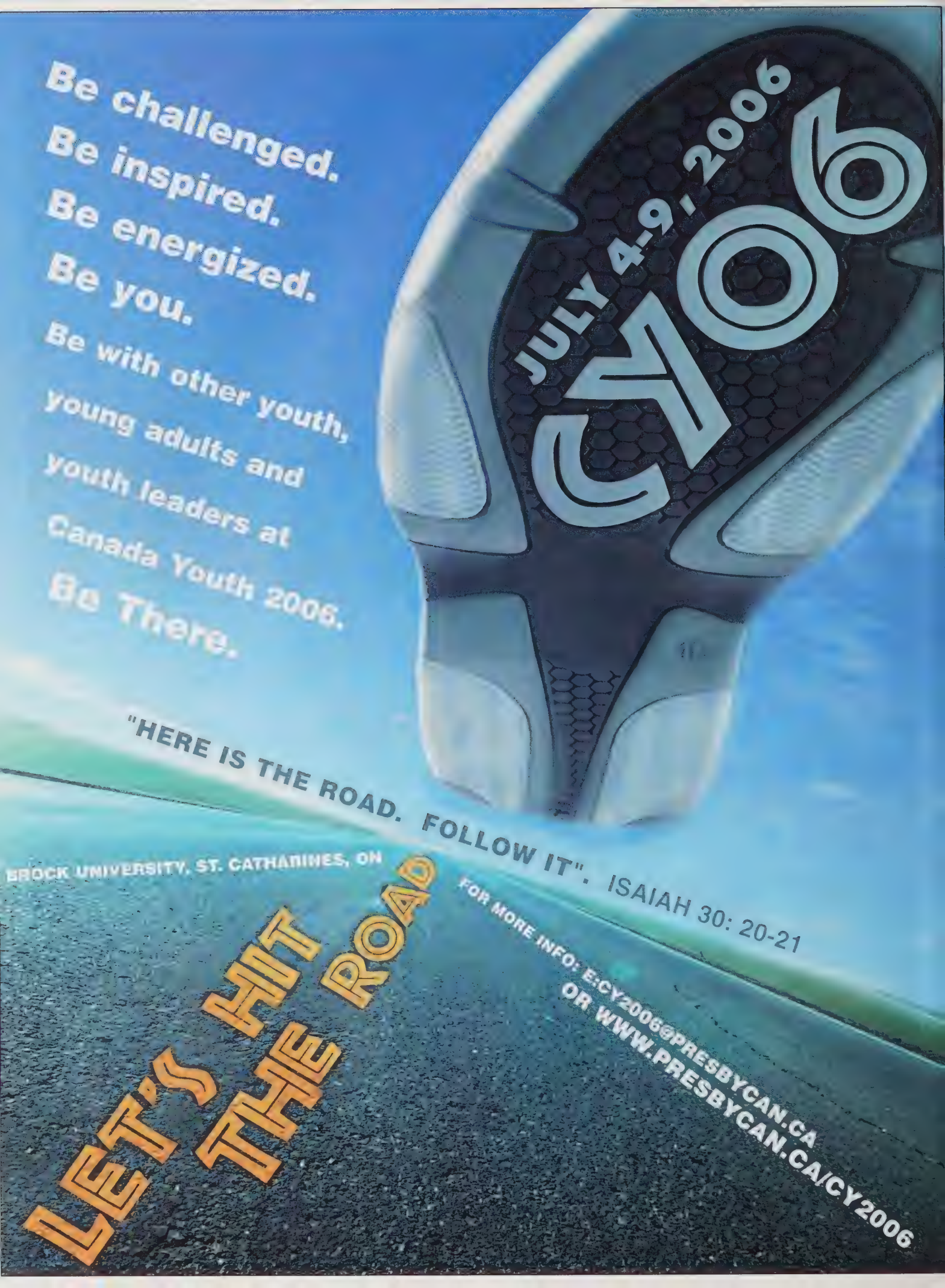
MODERATOR'S ITINERARY

March	
5	Knox, Calgary
6 – 8	Life and Mission Agency, Crieff Hills
18	Presbytery of Pictou
19	St. Andrew's, Westville, N.S.
20	Presbytery of Halifax-Lunenburg
22	Presbyterian College, Montreal
23	Refugee Program, Montreal
25	Presbytery of Montreal
26	St. Columba-by-the-Lake
26 – 28	Assembly Council



Group Shalom, a women's collective in Cantel, Guatemala. Along with Jean Morris are her husband Matthew Vyse, the women of the collective and Ken Kim of International Ministries personnel in Guatemala.




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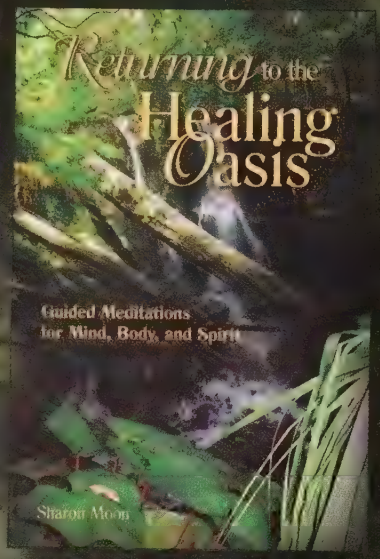
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PHOTO: BETHANY CARE SOCIETY

Ed Harrison and Phyllis McNeill are both residents of Bethany Care Society, Calgary. They met there and were married in the prayer chapel by Rev. Jean Morris.

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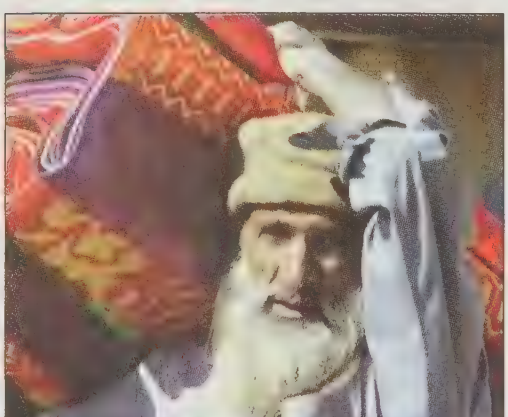
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A new report says clergy are spiritually exhausted, stressed, and have few friends and little support





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On the cover: Rev. Jean Morris with Elsie Vickers, resident of Bethany Care, Calgary. Photo by Kevin Zerr.

David Harris



Managing the inevitable changes

It takes an Internet search engine a quarter of a second to locate more than 32,000 references to the phrase "crisis or opportunity," probably about the same time it took Henry Kissinger to come up with the quip, "There cannot be a crisis next week; my schedule is already full."

Church and society in a fast-aging Canada face the same options today. Given how busy everyone is, it would seem opportunity is the better choice than crisis.

The aging factor is one easy to misinterpret in the church, less so in government or business. Pick up a newspaper any day of the week and you are likely to find a story about either public or private pension concerns: fewer younger people in the workforce and longer-living retirees is apparently not a situation the actuaries planned for.

The result is that many pension plans are underfunded and governments at every level are trying to determine how to provide increasingly expensive health-care benefits to the pool of potential recipients that threatens to overflow at any moment.

In the church, by contrast, we have often put the relatively increasing number of grey heads in the pews down to the fact that relatively fewer young people are attending church. That is partly true, but it misses the important point that the percentage of younger people in the general population is also shrinking.

The result in the church is less an issue of pensions but how to care for an aging congregation while attracting younger members. It's a crucial and challenging opportunity. As a whole, older and younger members will have different tastes in liturgy and music, not to mention different needs throughout the week.

Unfortunately, clergy are still educated to work in an outdated pastoral model. The church has for centuries been more a place of solace and support than transformation. Yet change is an essential part of our faith and requires skilled transformational leaders.

Besides this, the church is still largely organized around the concept of a volunteer organization, half of whose members—women— were available in the week to help with projects. This is rare today in most congregations. As a result, clergy often feel dislocated, unable to do what they thought their calling was and unsure of how either to change themselves or their flock.

Ordained ministry, as Dr. Andrew Irvine explains to Amy Cameron in this issue, is in crisis. Clergy feel like they are being asked to be chief executive officers of the congregation, not only a position they have not been trained for but one they have been purposely rejected as a model for ministry.

It's not only wrong to demonize business (the church is filled with faithful businesspeople), it is ultimately to look a gift horse in the mouth. The corporate world has much to teach the modern church.

The church does not have to become—should not become— a ruthless enterprise focused on the bottom line. But it can—and should—learn about efficiency and accountability and how to effect change in an organization.

The reality is that clergy have long been expected to be CEOs, but an otherwise romantic myth remains. Senior ministers at large churches such as St. Andrew and St. Paul in Montreal or Lakeshore St. Andrew's in Windsor, Ont., have essentially the same leadership responsibilities as the CEO of a small company.

The qualities of a good leader do not exclude pastoral and spiritual training, in fact they should enhance a leader's ability to effect change. Look in the business section of any bookstore today and the most popular topics all revolve around leadership: social and emotional intelligence, how to support and encourage colleagues.

These are the very qualities clergy need—and the Bible provides many examples, not the least of which is St. Paul, a roving CEO who established branch plants, then regularly visited, encouraged (and corrected when necessary) the regional managers. He also engaged in finance, fundraising and skills inventory.

Despite declines in attendance, the church is still probably the best-equipped institution in society for discussing and managing the demographic shifts in society. Where else do old and young gather so regularly around a common theme?

Managing the inevitable changes will not be easy but that is the challenge. It is a crisis or an opportunity for us all. It's our choice.

David Harris

letters

A counselling pool

Amy MacLachlan's article on Planning for Marriage (February) provides much grist for the marriage mill into which wedding planners have become the latest cost addition for couples aiming at the dream of a perfect wedding day. Life, dating, Internet dating, cohabitation, marital conflict, divorce, family conflicts and the lack of pre-marriage counselling and marriage enrichment programs pose challenges for couples, congregations, national church offices and society alike.

The question of training in marital counselling at church colleges and developing resources for marriage enrichment is a good one. I agree with my colleague John C. Henderson (Newmarket) that marriage preparation courses should cover the ABCs: Attitude, Behaviour and Communication, but as Dorothy Henderson points out, as a small denomination we can't do everything.

I developed and ran marriage preparation weekends for all couples getting married at Glenview, Toronto, for four years. Where smaller churches can't afford multiple staff, perhaps offering citywide marriage-preparation courses at a central location is one idea. Many Roman Catholic churches require attendance at pre-marriage courses. My model teaches couples communication and gets them to practice it, along with learning conflict resolution and healthy relationship behaviours through exercises, movie clips and mini-talks. Many churches used the *Learning To Live Together* series by Ed Bader, but the videos are from the '60s.

Pastoral counselling programs at seminaries grew out of the belief that an untrained and unskilled counsellor can be a dangerous thing. Yet not every church can afford to have a trained marriage counsellor on staff, even half time, to provide free counselling to individuals, couples and families who can't afford or access other services, or who want a faith-sensitive approach. Should seminaries train clergy in just pre-marriage and basic grief counselling skills? It takes a second Masters and a two-year clinical internship and many hours beyond that to become a Registered Marriage and Family Therapist.

It's just not practical to turn all ministers into therapists, yet clergy need basic skills to assess and refer couples.

To create vital, healthy, growing congregations, experiencing relationships that grow in and practice the presence of God, pastoral care must involve more than just marriage counselling. It's about how we in the church nurture and support faith and relationship development throughout the family life cycle—from childhood, youth ministries, leaving home, finding your soulmate, building a family (and a couple without kids can be a family), parenting and preparing for retirement and dynamic old age. Pastoral care journals have tended to follow the mental health-counselling framework, but churches are complex organizations that require understanding congregational systems. We are called to live in a covenant community, in relationship with one another: to listen, to be a companion, to love, to serve, to be oneself (God's creature). Boards, programs, group life, lay-ministry recruitment and training, administration, community environment and people all inter-relate in a unique system that forms every congregation. Church growth, congregational systems management and pastoral care across the life cycle all inter-relate in strengthening congregations.

I've long been an advocate of setting up a national data base of programs and resources from Presbyterian clergy all across Canada. I believe there are clergy out there with great resources in church growth, marriage preparation, congregational management, strategic planning etc., that all could tap into, if we only knew.

John Henderson
Toronto

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He's not alone at the camp

Thank you very much for the feature on Camp Douglas in February. I have received nothing but positive feedback. It would be unfair of me to allow people to believe that I have been director here since 1993. I am entering my 13th year of camp directorship, but I have served at many camps both here in B.C. and abroad in the Czech Republic. There have been several excellent directors at Camp Douglas over that time. The article correctly pointed to enthusiastic campers and a dedicated staff as the real reasons that our ministry has been so successful. I also feel the need to publicly acknowledge the efforts of our hard working camp committee and the many volunteers who come to our work parties, without whom the ministry would not be possible.

Gordi "Bear" Whitelaw
Roberts Creek, B.C.

Planning to fail

Doing business in the same old way is not a strategy in today's economic environment. So why is it that many church leaders today subscribe to this strategy for our local churches? Is this not a plan for failure? More likely, this is probably not a plan at all.

Spending time to form committees, which will review how our ministry can be delivered in an efficient manner, seems to me to be off the mark. Perhaps it would be wiser to centre our efforts and energies on delivering our ministry in a more efficient manner.

The economic woes facing many small churches today can likely be traced to resistance by members and leaders in changing their delivery system. We need to re-examine our visions and to develop meaningful strategies, which will allow us to connect with the growing numbers of underchurched or unchurched in our local communities. If we truly love the church of Jesus Christ, then the sacrifices to be made in order to facilitate the necessary changes will be much easier to accept.

John McNeilly
Exeter, Ont.

Noting the needs

Let me share our stretcher-bearing story (*Stretcher Bearer Ministeries* by Michael Slater). The author took time in his congregation to give out postcards so that during the service everyone would write a note to someone they knew, whether in the congregation or not. Then on Monday the cards were posted in the church. Great benefits occurred.

I enjoy writing notes to people in my congregation as an encouragement. I never remember what I've written, but I believe God has been guiding me, as many times I have been told that my note has come at the right moment for them.

I firmly believe this is a ministry from God, one that we all can share in, especially if you are interested in writing notes. I pop them in the folders at church and leave them to be found. Or I mail them to the people who need encouragement. As a good thrifty person, I pay for 100 stamps, charge the church, then give them back their cheque, thus getting my income tax receipt! But then I am free to write to people we are praying for. They too have appreciated it.

Dorothy Nekrassoff
Nepean, Ont.

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Passionate searchers of truth

The Letters section, where writers present various points of view, often passionately, is usually the first page I turn to. I enjoy the letters. I find them interesting, sometimes moving, even inspiring. In fact, I have written my share of letters and will, no doubt, write more. Yet, I share a sentiment similar to that expressed by J. Gordon Neal in his Letter About Letters (February). I find it difficult reconciling the passionate expression of single points of view to the concept of an all-encompassing love and understanding.

To my mind, everything—every question, every answer, every issue, every person, everything—has multiple sides, multiple points of view. There are sides I can, at any given time, see. There are sides I've seen, but have forgotten. There are sides I have yet to see. And I suspect there are always going to be sides that I will never see. And truth has always seemed so very elusive, moving fluidly from viewpoint to viewpoint, disassembling itself, so that part is here and part is there, depending on where I stand, or how I squint my eyes. I have never felt qualified to say, "This is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me, God."

So, I see nothing wrong with writing letters to passionately express one view or another, as long as, while we're passionately expressing ourselves, we don't forget to also remain passionate searchers of truth, and passionate, too, about our efforts to be understanding.

Michael Lehto
Thunder Bay, Ont.

Farewell to a faithful follower

On behalf of the elders and congregation of St. Paul's, Ingersoll, Ont., thank you for including the delightful picture of Marion Wilson and David Moyer in February. The motorcycle excursion was a visible incarnation of the adventurous spirits of the leaders of our faith family.

We regret to share with your readers the news that Dave died suddenly several months later. He was playing goalie for his beloved hockey team at the time.

While our sympathy and Christ's compassion have surrounded his wife Dale and their children, the memory of the now famous motorcycle ride lives in our hearts.

Rev. Dr. Lonnie S. Atkinson
Ingersoll, Ont.

Ode to an inspiring professor

Martha Kuwee Kumsa is one of the most inspiring professors I have ever met. As a social work student at Wilfrid Laurier University, I have learned more from her about social change and social action and the power of positive thought than from anyone else in my life. Martha challenges students everyday to become better people and to fight for what we truly believe. Her ability to connect and engage with students on a professional and personal level is grand. Her warm spirit is contagious and it has been such an honour to have her as a professor. As a young Presbyterian it was a delight to see this article in the *Record*! Thank you for sharing Martha with the rest of Canada!

Alicia Cooper
Waterloo, Ont.

Correction

The Synod of Toronto and Kingston was renamed the Synod of Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda at General Assembly last year. This name change will be reflected in our job opportunities listing as of this issue.

A People and Places item last month failed to properly name Knox, North Easthope, Ont.

The *Presbyterian Record* welcomes letters to the editor. Please include your name, home address and a daytime telephone number. We reserve the right to edit all letters for length and clarity.

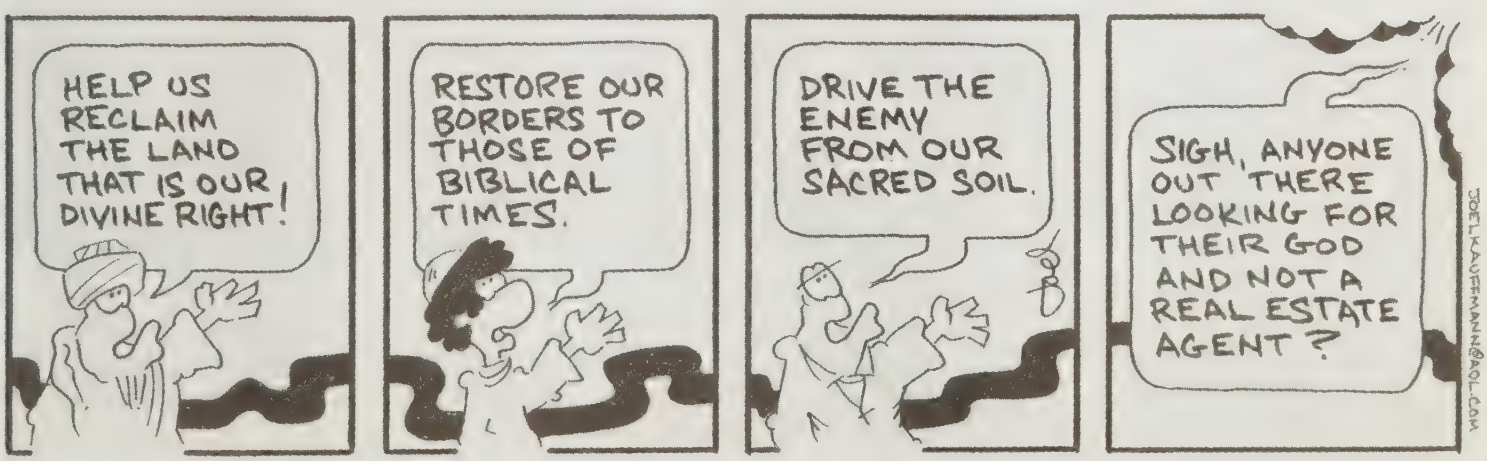
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Congratulations to our cover contest winner...

Anne Wilson,
Dundalk, Ont.

Pontius' Puddle



They've been doing it for 74 years at Guthrie, Alvinston, Ont., and they always get a big crowd, good speakers and have lots of fun. And why wouldn't they? We're talking about a Robbie Burns night with their own haggis—brought to the table this year by Hannah Symington as her brother Nathan followed with the spoon. For more information on this glorious tradition go to our website where you'll find a feature length article about Guthrie's haggis ministry.





Lydia Biddle used to be a professional singer, including an operatic repertoire. If you missed her on the great stages, you can still catch her at Knox, Bracebridge, Ont., where she is a regular member of the choir. In January she sang a solo on the occasion of her 95th birthday. Make a grateful noise unto the Lord, indeed!



The new year brought a new life for Rev. Marion Schaffer as she entered the next phase—retirement. Dean Hopper and Carolyn Jones, past and present clerks of session at Albion Gardens, Toronto, present her a gift from the congregation and their best wishes.

HAD CAKE LATELY? Share your celebrations with the rest of the church. Send your stories to PnP@presbyterianrecord.ca along with your digital photographs, 300 dpi minimum, high quality JPEGs. Or mail the photographs to: The Record, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, M3C 1J7.

To be considered for People and Places, photographs should be sharp and everyone clearly identified. The *Record* reserves the right to reject any photos not of sufficient quality. Photographs cannot be returned.

For more People & Places submissions please visit our website: www.presbyterianrecord.ca



Rev. Susanne Rescorl, Presbyterian minister from Fonthill, Ont., tells her dramatic story of encountering Christ on Reachout For Life this month. Presbyterian Dr. Larry Brice has been hosting the show on Crossroads Television Systems for two and a half years. The show has featured many Presbyterians, including Rev. George French who began public school as physically disabled and an asthmatic, but with the love and care of Christians and a remarkable coach in high school, made the Junior Olympics in the mile race and at one point held the Canadian record for the mile. The show airs on Sundays.

After renovations at St. Andrew's, Orillia, Ont., when the kitchen was enlarged, there was left a blank wall. Terri-Lee Milley had an idea, and the rest, as they say, is the story of this photo: Terrie-Lee and Rev. Doug Johns participate in the dedication ceremony.



King's, New Minas is a new church development, and it's doing exceedingly well. A new facility opened in 2000. Since then the kitchen and the church school classrooms have been finished. And the congregation is working hard to reduce the debt. But, as is always the case, the future often needs a little help from the past.

The MacDonald family—if the name doesn't give them away—has a long association with the church. Allister MacDonald had two Presbyterian minister brothers—Rev. Joe MacDonald and past moderator Rev. Dr. Donald MacDonald. And, recently members of Dr. MacDonald's family bequeathed over $200,000 to King's. From left: Don MacDonald; Rev. Tim Archibald, Helinda-Rae MacDonald, Anne Copeland, Bob and Jenny MacDonald and Dorice Sutcliffe, clerk of session.



PHOTO: BESSIE FLANDERS, ELDER

Clergy spiritually exhausted, stressed out

A new report shows Canadian ministry is 'in crisis' | BY AMY CAMERON

Forget the demise of the church. Look closer. Our ministers, according to a new study, are spiritually exhausted, stressed out, have few friends and little support. In short, Christian ministry in Canada is, in the words of the author of a recent report, "in crisis."

Clergy Well-Being: Seeking Wholeness with Integrity, a report compiled by Rev. Dr. Andrew Irvine of Knox College, shows that 77 per cent of the surveyed clergy felt they were more like a CEO than a pastor; 18 per cent could not identify a close friend in church or their community; and 80 per cent felt guilty if caught taking time off during the week even though most work a 50-hour week.

"There is a big disconnect between the call to ministry and what they actually do," says Irvine. "There were major issues around things like identity, relationships and competition among clergy."

Irvine was recently appointed director of the Centre for Clergy Care and Congregational Health, officially launched in February. Jointly sponsored by Emmanuel (United Church) and Knox, both at the University of Toronto, the centre will focus on helping clergy deal with the stressors identified in the study. "How do we use this data redemptively to bring change to the church and those who serve it?" asks Irvine. "We see it as being a crisis."

The study, begun in 2003 and funded by The Beatty Ryckman Trust, drew on responses from the clergy in six major denominations in Ontario: United, Presbyterian, Anglican, Evangelical Lutheran, Baptist and Pentecostal. Initially, questionnaires were sent to a sample group representing 30 per cent of the clergy. With a 27 per cent response rate, the data was then used to focus questions in direct interviews with men and women in ministry.

'Clergy have been seen as either superhuman who needed no friends or subhuman who could exist without them, but certainly not human'

"Eighty-three per cent saw a call to minister in a traditional sense. I am called of God," says Irvine, who also acts as coordinator of theological field education at Knox College and is the author of *Between Two Worlds: Understanding and Managing Clergy Stress*. "But then when you ask them about the job, more than 80 per cent said that it is more that of a CEO than a pastor." And with the almost constant barrage of speculation about the demise of the church, adds Irvine, ministers are forced into a position of being more concerned about the survival of the church and its fiscal operation than spiritual leadership.

The issue of clergy health is one that has come up often in the past several years. In 2001, for example, the Anglican Church of Canada's General Synod declared clergy wellness as a top priority and formed a task force to look at ways to support ministers. Pilot studies were started in three Ontario communities and in 2005 the clergy in the Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island diocese formed a professional association to offer continuing education, support and information to their members.

On a cold evening in February 2005, hundreds of people gathered in a funky downtown Toronto nightclub for the launch of a new book. All ages and stations were represented at the event, including a local minister and his wife. A well-meaning friend introduced the man to a group of people using his formal title. "Please don't," he stopped her. "Announcing that I'm a minister kills the conversation."

This story, when related to Irvine, elicits a sigh of recognition. "That's very true," he agrees. When he was a minister in the Church of Scotland, Irvine was commonly introduced as "our minister" or "the minister" but rarely, if ever, as "Andrew". Conversations in social settings inevitably died. "We don't admit to our sins because the holy person is here," he explains. "It is an identity that you can never get away from. A priest or minister, even when they're at home, remains a priest or minister."

In the past, professional ethics dictated that clergy should avoid forming personal relationships with members of the congregation or community. Any show of favouritism or the whiff of indiscretion could jeopardize a minister's position. But this strict view has stifled the very human need to make and maintain close relationships. "Many clergy could not identify a close friend in the church or the community," says Irvine of those surveyed in the study. The high level of competition among clergy in the same denomination make even relationships between peers very strained. Many ministers, in fact, could only name their spouse as a close friend which, says the professor, brings up a whole host of other issues around marriage and ministry. "Clergy have been seen as either superhuman who needed no friends or subhuman who could exist without them, but certainly not human."

Isolation, balancing family with the church and fulfilling a minister's spiritual needs are among the issues that Irvine and



Moderator Rev. Jean Morris received the Alberta Centennial Medal at a surprise presentation in January. "Jean's contribution to the church, community, the province and our country are insurmountable," said Harry Chase, Member of the Legislative Assembly for Calgary-Varsity. The medal celebrates Alberta's centennial and is presented to Albertans whose achievements have made a significant contribution to their fellow citizens, their community and their province.

the centre are examining in their clergy workshops across the country. By bringing together ministers from different denominations but in similar positions (rural vs. urban, for example), the workshops provide a safe and comfortable forum for men and women to discuss their problems and, most important, work toward some solutions. "Clergy are looking to back away from the heat of the parish to work with their calling and their personal life. These are good people who want, in all sincerity, to serve God and the world in any way they can," says Irvine. "What I believe is that there lies within clergy and each one of us the means to move to recovery and health. We're now being proactive."

The centre, which is still working on a fee structure for its services (though funding will be available to those who need it, assures Irvine), will continue to research the issues surrounding ministry and will work with congregations to establish a vision for the future and help answer the question: what does it mean to be a church in the 21st century? The ultimate goal, says Irvine, is to eventually offer online courses to clergy on issues not taught in seminary. One course, for example, could be How to Deal with the Antagonist in Your Midst. "There's one or two in every congregation," laughs Irvine. – *Amy Cameron is a freelance writer.*

Resources for thoughtful Christians

CONGREGATIONS, INDIVIDUALS, study group leaders and educators have a new resource thanks to a website launched in February. The site offers more than 50 adult study units on topics ranging from *The DaVinci Code* to same-sex marriage to stem cell research. See www.TheThoughtfulChristian.com.

Additional studies will be added monthly, including sessions that respond to breaking news. Freda Gardner, former moderator of the Presbyterian Church (USA), praised the U.S.-based site. "Christian by the grace of God. Thoughtful by continuing to learn and grow. The Thoughtful Christian is a rich resource and a gift to the church."

Sessions can be purchased individually, in a study pack of five units, or as a 12-month subscription for $250 allowing unlimited downloads. Studies can then be distributed for use. The Thoughtful Christian is an initiative of the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, the trade publishing arm of PC(USA). – *AM*

Only grace can empower

WCC addresses the challenges facing the church today

Economic and technological globalization has made it easier for strangers to talk as neighbours but is creating profound new challenges for the Christian church, said the moderator of the World Council of Churches at its ninth assembly in February in Porto Alegre, Brazil.

"Strenuous efforts have been made in history to transform the world," said Catholicos Aram I of the Armenian Apostolic Church, speaking at the assembly. "All political, religious, economic, ideological and technological attempts have failed." He asserted therefore, "As Christians, we believe that only God's grace can empower, renew and transform humanity and creation."

• "Poverty doesn't just exist—it is manufactured by those who control the markets," said Yashpal Tandon, executive director of the South Centre in Geneva, a think tank working on issues related to trade and economic development in Africa. "Poverty is not a natural phenomenon, but is the fruit of deliberate policy and churches must challenge the economic institutions that create and perpetuate the policies," the Ugandan economist told the assembly.

The WCC, which meets every seven years and has spoken on economic justice issues throughout its 58-year existence, declared at its last assembly in 1998 that "the logic of globalization needs to be challenged by an alternative way of life of community in diversity."

• "Just as atomic weapons changed the very way we thought about life, so too the potential of major climatic changes puts life as we know it in danger," WCC general secretary Rev. Samuel Kobia said in his main report.

"This is not an issue for the future: severe consequences are already being experienced by millions of people," said Kobia. "In an era where there is more than enough food to go around many times over, 852 million people across the world are hungry, up from 842 million in 2003."

• A growing gap between ecumenical institutions and the churches they were created to serve is deepening the threat of survival faced by groups such as the WCC. "We are at a critical point," said Catholicos Aram I. "I see a growing gap between ecumenical institutions and new forms of ecumenism that are appearing."

Aram noted that the ecumenical movement had become an arena for "new tensions and alienations." This was seen as a reference to controversies within churches on issues such as homosexuality, as well as disputes between the WCC's Protestant and Orthodox member churches.

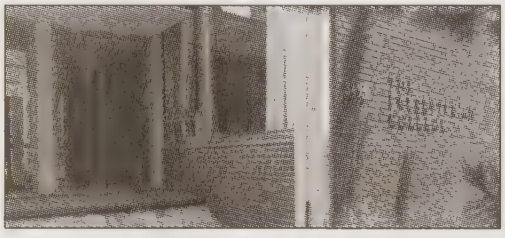
"Many churches misinterpret ecumenism; they equate it with the forces of liberalism and secularism. They fear that it threatens the church's moral teachings and will lead to proselytism and syncretism," he said.

• Women are playing a stronger role than in the past at the assembly. "This year we are celebrating an increased participation by women. We are 37 per cent of the delegates and 45 per cent of the participants," said Agnes Aboum, the WCC's Africa regional president.

• Kobia also proposed that three worldwide bodies jointly hold the next meetings of their highest governing bodies.

The proposal was welcomed by Bishop Mark Hanson, of the Lutheran World Federation and Rev. Clifton Kirkpatrick, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. Hanson said the proposal "broadens the scope of the ecumenical movement and provides a way for Christian world communions to make a larger contribution to the wider ecumenical movement." – *ENI*

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"Shaping Transformational Church Leaders"

Colleges confer honorary degrees

Canada's three Presbyterian colleges have announced the dates for their spring convocations. The schedules are as follows:

THE PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE, MONTREAL
When: Thursday, May 11, 2006 at 7.30 p.m.
Where: The Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul, Montreal
Guest speaker: Rev. Dr. Craig Barnes, Meneilly Professor of Leadership and Ministry at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Barnes will also address the graduates at an 11 a.m. lecture given on the same day, followed by the graduates' luncheon.
Honorary degree: Doctor of Divinity will be conferred upon Rev. J.P. (Ian) Morrison, recently retired general secretary, Life and Mission Agency.

KNOX COLLEGE, TORONTO
When: Wednesday May 10, 2006 at 7:30 p.m.
Where: Convocation Hall, University of Toronto
Guest speaker: Rev. Daniel Aleshire, Executive Director of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada. Aleshire is co-author of *Being There: Culture and Formation in Two Theological Seminaries.*
Honorary degrees: Doctor of Divinity will be conferred upon Giollo Kelly, an elder who has served the national church in numerous capacities for more than 50 years, and the Hon. David Kilgour, a Member of Parliament for 38 years, whose faith led him to advocate for the strengthening of Canada's human rights commitments in areas like Burma, Zimbabwe and Darfur. He is also a strong believer in promoting awareness and understanding across and among differing faiths.

ST. ANDREW'S HALL, VANCOUVER
When: Monday, May 8, 2006 at 7:00 p.m.
Where: Christ Church Cathedral, Vancouver
Guest speaker: Rev. Dr. Brian Thorpe, United Church of Canada
Honorary degree: Doctor of Divinity will be conferred upon Rev. Dr. Brian Thorpe, Most Rev. David Crawley, Anglican Church of Canada, and Bill Walker, Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Global internships for university grads

PROJECT PLOUGHSHARES, an ecumenical peace centre sponsored by the Canadian Council of Churches and based in Waterloo, Ont., is accepting applications for six-month internships with peace and security non-governmental organizations around the world.

Ploughshares has managed the highly competitive international internship program called Young Professionals International since 1997. The program is funded by Foreign Affairs Canada as part of the Government of Canada's Youth Employment Strategy. Almost 100 young professionals have been placed with Ploughshare's help.

For 2006 - 2007, 10 positions are being offered to new university graduates with organizations such as the World Council of Churches in Geneva, Pax Christi International in Brussels, the Africa Peace Forum in Nairobi and the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Accra, Ghana.

For details, visit www.ploughshares.ca/what/YPIprogram.htm

Kim new PWS&D director



KENNETH KIM will be the new director of Presbyterian World Service and Development. He succeeds Rev. Rick Fee, who became the general secretary of the Life and Mission Agency last year. Kim will officially assume the position on Aug. 1. Kim said he is looking forward to working with the staff and "contributing to one of the most dynamic programs within the church."

Married, with four children, Kim will be leaving his post in Central America with International Ministries after 11 years of service. "I will miss the overwhelming sense of hope that flourishes in Central America despite the graphic examples of poverty, injustice and oppression so common throughout the developing world," he said. "I have been honoured to serve with women and men of faith and commitment who give it their all in His service."

He has worked in a variety of capacities including human and labour rights, community and church development, youth ministry and mission education. He has worked with grassroots groups, indigenous communities, churches and related agencies, local and international governments and international lending and development agencies. He is fluent in English, Korean and Spanish.

PWS&D on Vision TV

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH'S work in tsunami-hit areas was highlighted on Vision TV in February. *Day by Day, Step by Step* documents what the Presbyterian, United, Mennonite and Anglican tsunami rehabilitation project is accomplishing. The documentary follows the impact of the tsunami on the fishing village of Indintakarai in south India, and shows how the churches are helping the community rebuild and the challenges that still exist.

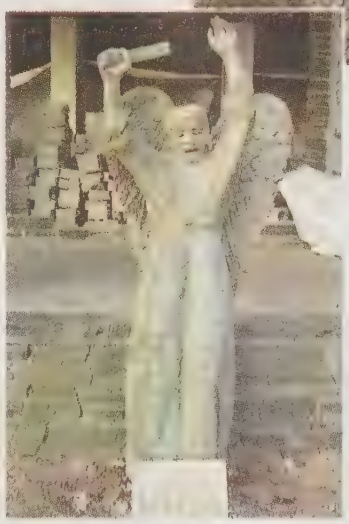
The 26-minute video can be ordered through Presbyterian World Service and Development. To learn more about the film, visit www.daybydayfilm.org.

Bringing hope in the hurricane's wake

Canadian teams help restore a nearby world that is frighteningly fragile | BY KELLY SIBTHORPE

Many natural disasters occur far away, but that was not the case with the damage caused by Hurricane Katrina off the Gulf Coast. Under the guidance of Rev. Terry Hastings, two teams of grunt workers, from Knox and St. Andrew's, both in Stratford, Ont., and other local churches, left in the wee hours one November night last year on a two-day drive to Orange Grove Camp in Gulfport, Mississippi. The eye of Katrina directly hit Gulfport on the night of Aug. 28, 2005. Orange Grove volunteer village was hastily set up after Katrina by Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA). PWS&D, which sanctioned our group, works closely with PDA to co-ordinate volunteer groups from Canada.





Flying the colours: Canadians Stewart Robinson and Kelly Sibthorpe join Californian Jeff Monteiro , camp director Mark Whyte and David Barnhart, PDA documentarian. Left: An angel awaits a clean church.

The group was scheduled to work for one solid week of first-stage restoration, a term used to describe the labour necessary to completely remove the interior of a home right down to the superstructure. Black mould was everywhere in flood-ravaged homes and everything had to come out. More than 600,000 homes along the Gulf Coast were destroyed and required either demolition or first-stage restoration.

Rev. Rob Congram of Baden, Ont., wrote this reflection following his mission trip. It represents only a small part of his total experience during our trip to Gulfport:

"Rev. George Barnett was the minister of Long Beach Presbyterian on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. He is 60-something, has a southern drawl and there is warmth about him. He kind of reminds you of Colonel Sanders but not as rotund. Eleven weeks earlier Katrina took his church, his house, his livelihood. Infinitely more devastating—some members of his congregation didn't make it through the storm. On our first Sunday morning in Mississippi he tells us this: 'Material things can be replaced ... and most of what we have we don't need,' and then his voice breaks and fails as he tries to speak of his friends. He is broken-hearted and grief-stricken. He is trying to be faithful to God but the weight of his life is crushing him.

"As you contemplate the loss experienced by those who survived Hurricane Katrina, you see that in part it is a loss of innocence—as William Butler Yeats wrote in his poem *The Second Coming*, 'innocence is drowned.' Gone is the illusion that we have sovereignty over our lives—this Western Protestant notion that somehow we have control of our destiny doesn't amount to much when your house is under water.

"William Hazlett wrote: 'No young man thinks that he will ever die.' And to some extent that is true of us all. And so we live our lives like drunken sailors—lurching from one thing to the next, believing that we have a bottomless reservoir of days. The people of the Gulf Coast have been divested of ideas of earthly immortality. Our lives, and the lives of those around us, are frighteningly fragile," Congram wrote.

As I write this, plans are made for the departure of a group of 17 people in late February from St. Andrew's, Stratford, for a week of work at Orange Grove volunteer village. The expected life span of the village is three years; such is the magnitude of recovery. PDA operates five such volunteer villages along the Gulf Coast from Biloxi, Mississippi to New Orleans. Maybe God is calling you to organize a team. It will change the lives of those desperately seeking hope out of chaos. – *Kelly Sibthorpe is the pastoral care assistant at St. Andrew's, Stratford, Ont.*



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Church of England to disinvest over occupation

ENI–The general synod of the Church of England has voted for pulling funds from companies profiting from the "illegal occupation" of Palestinian territories. The synod said it was heeding "the call from our sister church, the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East, for morally responsible investment in the Palestinian occupied territories and, in particular, to disinvest from companies profiting from the illegal occupation."

• A former archbishop of Canterbury, Lord (George) Carey, told Israel's English-language *Jerusalem Post* daily newspaper the decision—backed by his successor Rowan Williams—was "a most regrettable and one-sided statement."

Carey joined Jewish leaders in protesting against the vote by the general synod.

• Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Desmond Tutu, who as archbishop of Cape Town supported divestment campaigns to bring an end to apartheid in South Africa, said the issue of divestment was a moral decision.

"It reminds me so much of what used to happen at home [South Africa]. And I have said there is no way there is going to be real security until there is justice," Tutu told journalists.

Malawi churches fight domestic violence

ENI–Church leaders in Malawi, disturbed at the rate of domestic violence underlined by the recent case of a wife having both arms chopped off by her husband, are joining hands across denominational lines to find ways to halt the scourge for their society.

"There is a need for the church to review theologies, the ministries, the way marriages are instituted and community life. There is a need to provide comprehensive pre-marriage and post-marriage counselling and training," read a communiqué church leaders signed and that congregations have been hearing at recent services.

Aceh rebuilding slowly

ENI–Thousands of residents in Aceh—the area hardest hit by the December 2004 tsunami—remain in tents and other temporary shelter provided by the United Nations and international aid agencies. Such tents are common in the neighbourhood of Lampaseh Kota, a particularly affected area of the provincial capital of Banda Aceh.

Recently, one of the residents of the neighbourhood, Afifuddin, 26, recounted to a group of visitors some of the frustrations of the last year. Lampaseh Kota, he said, had seen its population decimated from 5,000 to 1,000. He lost grandparents, nieces, nephews, a brother and a sister. Only a nephew survived. "The next step needs to be on making us independent," said Afifuddin, who has a degree in information technology.

The tsunami killed an estimated 232,000 people in different parts of Asia and even in far away East Africa, and it is believed as many as 170,000 perished in Aceh alone.

Slovaks shun reality TV

ENI–Slovakian bishops have welcomed a drop in viewing figures for TV reality shows, after Christian groups accused them of eroding moral values.

"We are grateful to everyone who is giving up the third-rate culture presented in certain media," the bishops said in a joint statement. "We urge all of you to be brave in living the Christian life in practice. In this blessed way, you can help to build healthy families in an integrated society."

Japanese Catholics mark 500th anniversary

ENI–Roman Catholics in Japan are celebrating the 500th anniversary of the birth of St. Francis Xavier, the Catholic missionary who brought Christianity to Japan in 1549. The saint was born on April 7, 1506.

In this multi-religious but largely secularized country, Francis Xavier is so famous that his name and his portrait are said to be familiar to young children, who learn about him at primary schools.

In Kagoshima, where he landed in1549, St. Xavier's Cathedral plans to hold concerts to mark the celebration. And in Tokyo, the Kanda Catholic Church, also known as St. Francis Xavier, held a commemorative mass in December.

Forgive us our trespasses

ENI–The Church of England has apologized for the damage done by its role in the British transatlantic slave trade in the 19th century and earlier and it has pledged to continue campaigning against modern slavery.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, spiritual head of 77 million Anglicans worldwide, said the church had a duty to acknowledge ancestral guilt. "The Body of Christ is not just a body that exists at any one time; it exists across history and we therefore share the shame and the sinfulness of our predecessors," said Williams.

• Lutheran bishops in Denmark are urging dialogue with Muslims following a worldwide furor about cartoons depicting the prophet Mohammed that first appeared in a Danish newspaper but have since been reprinted in other European countries in an assertion of press freedom.

Bishops in Denmark call for dialogue with Muslims. "We should dissociate ourselves from the drawings as well as from the burning of the Danish flag with the white cross," said Copenhagen's Lutheran bishop, Norman Svendsen. "It is incredibly important that we go on talking to one another."

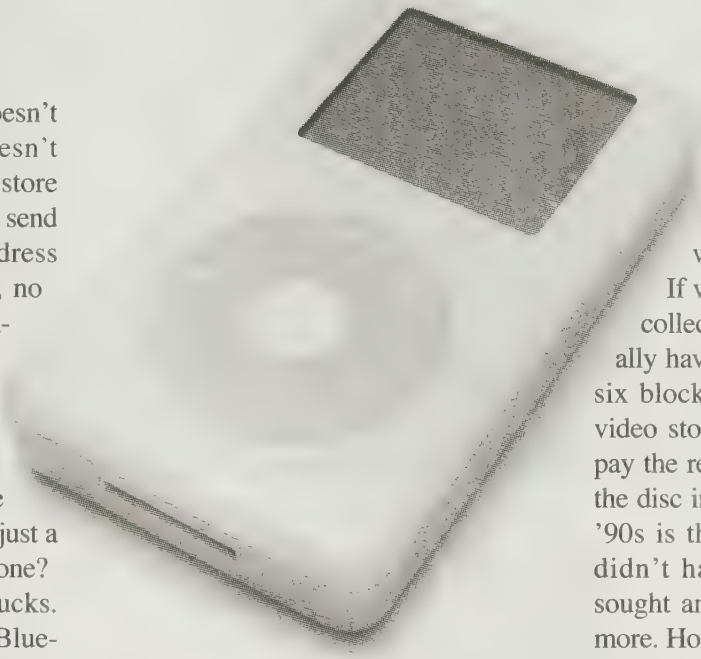
• Desmond Tutu has apologized to the global Islamic community over cartoons in a Danish newspaper caricaturing the prophet Mohammed, but urged Muslims incensed over the publication to exercise tolerance and forgiveness in their protests.

"We would wish to send to the [Muslim] community the message of our distress, and hope they will be able ... in the end to forgive what has really upset them very deeply," said Tutu while attending the dedication of an All Africa Conference of Churches ecumenical centre named after him in Nairobi in February.

Knock on wood, count your blessings

iLife, iThis, meThat

BY ANDREW FAIZ



My cell phone sucks. It doesn't take photographs, it doesn't make movies, it doesn't store or play music, it doesn't receive or send email and it doesn't store my address book. It doesn't even have games; no solitaire, no shoot-em-ups, no smash-em-ups, no Tetris, no chess. It does have Internet capacity but I don't know how to access it. And it does not play television shows. It does receive and send phone calls and the range is pretty good. But, really, it's just a phone and who needs that from a phone?

My personal digital assistant sucks. It's not in colour, it doesn't have Bluetooth, it doesn't receive or send phone calls, it doesn't have email capacity, it doesn't take, store or play movies, it doesn't take, store and slideshow photographs, it doesn't carry Word or Excel or Powerpoint documents, it can't be connected to a television or a projector and it doesn't have push technology. It does store my address book and memos. But, really, who can live with just that from a PDA?

My iPod is all right but three months after I bought it Apple introduced the video version. My iPod stores only music—a lot of it, of course—but that's it. It doesn't slideshow my photographs or play movies. I can't connect it to my television and use it as a movie player.

At home we have four computers and they're all right, I suppose. But not one of them is the new iMac with a "20-inch widescreen LCD with 1680x1050 resolution, 2.0GHz Intel Core Duo with 2MB shared L2 cache, 512MB (single SO-DIMM) 667MHz DDR2 SDRAM, 250GB Serial ATA hard drive, slot-load 8x double-layer SuperDrive, ATI Radeon X1600 graphics with 128MB GDDR3 memory, built-in AirPort Extreme and Bluetooth 2.0." I mean, our computers do not have iSight, iLife, iThis, meThat!

My iPod is all right but three months after I bought it Apple introduced the video version

Of course, we have Ethernet and Wi-Fi at home, but not one of the computers is connected to our television or our music delivery systems. If we want music in our living room, for example, we have to actually play it from there. We don't have a one-button, one-source home entertainment network. We don't have the "HP Digital Media Receiver [which] gives you access to digital content stored on your PC over your home network." So desperate is our situation we sometimes have to play CDs; though we have been spared the indignity of pulling out our albums and tapes.

If we want to watch a movie, furthermore, we actually have to get up, place a DVD in the player and press the buttons with a remote controller. Sometimes when we have the hunger for a particular movie—perhaps something strange and wonderful by Tati or something silly and mindless by Fellini—then, well, I shudder to think about it. If we don't own a copy of it in our collection, then—get this—we actually have to leave the house and go the six blocks to the great neighbourhood video store, check their aisles, select it, pay the rental fee, come home and place the disc in the DVD player. I mean, how '90s is that? One time the video store didn't have a copy of the movie we sought and we had to wait. A week, or more. How '80s is that?

Our fridge doesn't have a built-in computer tracking our rotting vegetables. Our car doesn't have GPS. Our toilet rolls don't play Beethoven.

Of course—knock on wood, count our blessings—we haven't had to deal with VHS tapes for a few years. Though we do keep the VCR connected, sort of as a retro-chic thing.

But don't get me wrong, I'm not complaining. I mean, you know, life is good. It's all right. A little grit makes the pearl, I suppose. It can't hurt to suffer, a little, and all that. I mean, it would be nice if there were some government program that guaranteed us all our "own personal Jesus, someone to hear your prayers; someone who cares. To help you reach out and touch faith."

And if there were, I'd like to ask him about that camel and eye-of-the-needle comment he made. I mean, exactly how does he define rich?

Andrew Faiz is a writer, producer and filmmaker. He is also managing editor of the *Record*. You can reach him at mngeditor@presbyterianrecord.ca.



Jan Burgerhout, chaplain with Bethany Care Society, leads a worship service at Bethany Harvest Hills, a homelike care centre for residents in the middle to late stages of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

BY AMY MACLACHLAN

IN AN AGING CHURCH, *who is caring for the aged?*

Seniors' needs and talents can be ignored in quest for younger members

Greta loves to garden, take pictures of her grandchildren and dance in her living room. A church-going woman all her life, she is a widow, and loves any opportunity to help others. She is 70 years old and a retired school teacher who travelled the world during summer vacations. Her growing congregation is always in need of volunteers, but Greta has only been asked to bake her famous lemon pound cake for Sunday coffee time and knit blankets for the church's mission project in Malawi. She wants to do something where her talents and knowledge would truly be put to use, but is hesitant to ask, believing the younger folk don't need an old biddy like her.

At 80 years old, Walter often lies in bed, trying to remember Sunday service. If he closes his eyes, he can still smell the coffee brewing in the church kitchen, see the gleam of the mahogany pews and hear the heavenly choir. But with each passing day, the memories grow more distant, the details foggy and dim. Confined to a nursing home, Walter's Alzheimer's is progressing. His wife has to remind him of her name when she visits and he doesn't understand why the middle-aged man who's there every Saturday gets teary-eyed when he doesn't know who he is. What confuses Walter the most is a lack of contact with the congregation. An elder for 25 years, he never missed a session meeting. Involved so intimately for so long, he never receives a visit from the minister and receives only sporadic phone calls from the pastoral care team. He feels forgotten and alone, comforted only by his Bible and the hymns he plays on his record player.

The Presbyterian Church is aging. In 1999, 47 per cent of the church's membership was 55 and older, with 33 per cent above age 65. Looking ahead to 2010, a growing number of those will be 75 and older, according to the report of the General Assembly-appointed study group on membership decline.

Because of these numbers, many congregations are looking for ways to attract youth, young couples and families to ensure the longevity of the denomination. But because of this endeavour, are seniors—healthy and involved as well as aging and confined—being lost in the frantic search for the fountain of youth?

Moderator Jean Morris thinks the church can do better.

PHOTO: BETHANY CARE SOCIETY

In 1999, 47 per cent of the church's membership was 55 and older, with 33 per cent above age 65. Looking ahead to 2010, a growing number of those will be 75 and older

She chose seniors' issues as one of her moderatorial themes, believing older adults have an integral and meaningful role to play and have numerous pastoral care issues that the church should consider. "It's a symptom of our society. We don't like to talk about aging. We want to be youthful and vital, and that's reflected in our church," she said in an interview with the *Record*. "The reality is that we're an aging population, and to exclude seniors within the vision of the church is a total denial of who we are in the PCC and in Canadian society—and we need not be afraid of that. As people who are to be inclusive, we can't shut our eyes to some."

Morris' perception that the church is forgetting its seniors may not be far from the mark. Jim Czegledi, associate secretary for evangelism and church growth, wouldn't say this is the case, but did acknowledge that congregations often do—and should—attempt to reach out to youth. As they do this, however, Czegledi said congregations have to remember how seniors fit into the mix. "The older generation is pivotal in being hospitable to new and younger people, and in welcoming them to the church," he said. "They are also spiritual role models and mentors. They can provide a model of faith and service for younger members."



He said one of the biggest struggles for many congregations is figuring out a worship style that appeals to everyone. It is not unheard of for churches to drastically change their style in efforts to attract young blood, leaving seniors feeling alienated and forgotten. This is something that must be avoided, according to Czegledi. "It's not true to say that all younger people want contemporary worship and all older people want it to be traditional. Contemporary is a mindset and an attitude, and there are lots of seniors with that attitude."

One suggestion is to offer blended worship, incorporating both contemporary and traditional elements. Critics say this results in a watered-down worship style that is neither one nor the other, "but it's a place to start," said Czegledi.

Identifying the various groups in the congregation and providing worship that nurtures all of them is the main task. "So what's the church to do?" he asks. "It has to examine its mission and see how it can faithfully and fruitfully live out that mission."

Determining seniors' needs is becoming increasingly difficult and complex as those who fall under this umbrella are diverse in their needs and abilities. Ages can span 40 years, comprise three generations and have varying levels of health and lifestyle preferences. According to the annual report of the Bethany Care Society (a non-profit organization offering care to Alberta's seniors and where Morris is director of spirituality and pastoral care), these circumstances will continue as one-quarter of Canada's population is projected to be 65 years or older by 2030, and the already increasing 85-plus demographic will continue to grow. Statistics Canada estimates that by 2015 there will be more people over the age of 65 than under the age of 15.

When the residents at Bethany Care were asked for their top three spiritual needs, they listed belonging as number one, coping with the reality of dementia second, and grief and loss as their third concern. They also listed worship, small group reflection and visiting as important, which comes as no surprise to Morris because they are all indicators of belonging. Activities that aid belonging, says Morris, are "life-giving."

Residents whose congregations are attentive to them experience a higher quality of life and feel that God's presence is real in their lives, said Morris. "It's equally saddening to hear from someone, 'I was an elder for 35 years. I helped build the place. I don't even know if they know I'm alive.' That's the power of connection with a family of faith, and the power of absence."

Some churches are starting to find a balance. At First Presbyterian, Chatham, Ont., the congregation's pastoral care team regularly visits people in need. In addition to First's focus on youth and young families, the congregation is very much aware of the need to include seniors. "The two groups that are falling through the cracks at church are the very young and the very old," said Rev. Mike Maroney, explaining that kids and teens are often not ministered to at all and seniors are often unable to get to church or not accommodated once there. "A Christian community is a family throughout your life. The older generation has contributed so much and they need our love, our company and our interest."

Since piling all the visitations onto Maroney was too much for him to handle, the congregation made a focused effort last fall to pass much of this responsibility onto interested members. "It's very encouraging. People very gladly took on this ministry," said Maroney. "They love to visit and share their faith. You have to create leaders, give them a ministry and let it go."

The team visits nursing homes and individuals regularly and keeps detailed records of these visits. They send out cards on special occasions and they're currently figuring out how to bring communion to seniors' homes. The church's youth band, 24/Seven, is brainstorming on how to take its music ministry to these

MINISTERING TO SENIORS—SOME EASY EXAMPLES

PRACTICAL CONCERNS like making the building wheelchair-accessible, offering hearing aids, seat cushions and large-print Bibles and hymn books and providing free transportation to and from Sunday worship and church events are no-brainers, but there are other things that can be done to help seniors feel valued, involved and welcomed.

Seniors often find it difficult to access community services and resources. To help out, set up a table in an easily accessible area with pamphlets, phone numbers and other information that seniors may need. Home care, meal delivery, cleaning services, community activities and health information are just some of the possibilities.

Organize a choir performance or sing-along at a local seniors' home by the Sunday school class. The experience is a great way for children to engage in this ministry and older adults enjoy the younger company.

Mark holidays and special occasions with poinsettia deliveries, cards and birthday treats, and mail church newsletters so they stay informed of what's going on.



Establish a team whose main job is to visit seniors regularly in their homes and in care. If resources don't permit this, partner with other congregations and/or denominations. It's a great way to establish ecumenical relationships while sharing the work load.

Seniors are often unable to sit through a full-length service and may find it difficult to concentrate on a service with a lot of reading and talking (especially if they have symptoms of dementia). To help, hold a mid-week service that is short, music and prayer-based, and followed by a time of hospitality and fellowship. This is a great way to nurture relationships and establish a small, close-knit community, and is another opportunity to partner with nearby congregations if resources are limited.

Young seniors are the largest group of volunteers in Canada. Is the church being a good steward of this resource? Ask seniors what the church can do to help them feel included and validated, and if they are able, approach them with responsibilities not typically given to them. For example, instead of asking them to be Sunday school teachers or cake bakers, ask them to help with the Christmas pageant or food bank, sit on the missions committee, or even to be part of the pastoral care team.

Learn about fun and stimulating things to do when interacting with seniors, especially with those with more advanced dementia. Brian Ducedre, a chaplain at St. Joseph's hospital in Comox, B.C., advises adapting your verbal pastoral presence to a sensory one as abilities decline. Speaking at the Dreambuilder's conference in Calgary last October, he said music therapy, touch, eye contact, olfactory stimulation, prayers and hymns are especially welcomed. "How can we make a person feel well in a body that's not working well?"

Contact the chaplains at local nursing homes and hospitals. Make a connection and let them help guide you in what is needed. Most chaplains will be more than willing to be a part of your efforts.

Seniors are often on the bottom of the totem pole when it comes to public policy. Congregations can act as advocates, raising awareness of seniors' issues and lobbying governments to act on issues such as affordable housing, health care, and availability of services. Knox, Sundridge, Alta. marked its 125th anniversary by partnering with the Alzheimer's Society.

Whatever you choose, be sure to evaluate the program after several months. Determine if it is meeting the spiritual and emotional needs of those targeted, and change things if it is not. *–AM*



The historic All Saints Chapel is a dedicated worship space for residents, family members, staff and volunteers of Bethany Cochrane.

communities, and Maroney said one of the pastoral care team members now accompanies him on his hospital visits.

"It's just phenomenal. They all have gifts and they bring that to bear," he said. "I'm just thrilled and I thank God that people are stepping up."

Providing such validation and connection is important to every human's well-being, and becomes increasingly more so in old age. Dr. Gabor Maté is a Vancouver physician and author of *When the Body Says No: The Cost of Hidden Stress*. He spoke at Bethany Care's Dreambuilder's Education conference in Calgary last October. He said that emotional isolation actually suppresses the immune system and that human connection and relationships are essential to well-being. Add a major stressor such as an injury or the death of a spouse, and the chances of getting ill increase. The *National Post* reported that for women aged 65 and older, psychological distress (which includes frequent feelings of sadness, worthlessness and hopelessness) are predictors of death. Providing meaningful involvement and spiritual connection for seniors can help stave off negative feelings, therefore increasing well-being and good health.

Rexdale Church in Toronto built and helps operate a seniors' home next door to the church building. It was the first of

PHOTO: (TOP) BETHANY CARE SOCIETY

its kind in Toronto. Bonar-Parkdale, Toronto, runs a similar housing unit. Rexdale's building is named Highway Terraces and celebrated its 29th anniversary last November. The residence's 194 suites house mostly seniors who are still able to live independently. A support service provides minimal assistance such as cleaning, meal-making and visiting. Seventy-five of the residents pay full rent; the rest are subsidized, as affordable housing is one area of growing importance for seniors.

George King, 85 years old and clerk of session, said the project has been so successful that they're hoping to establish a nursing home for seniors who need long-term care. Rev. Daniel Cho, minister at Rexdale, said the residence is "enmeshed with the congregation, but distinct." He said many people who live at Highway Terraces come to Rexdale on Sunday mornings, and residents who are members of other churches also attend occasionally.

A seniors' club exists for the residents and they often use the church for different events and activities throughout the year. He said the congregation tries "to inject enthusiasm" into existing programs, and he regularly visits the residents. "We focus well on seniors' ministries and respect them and hold them in high regard," said Cho. "We are a diverse congregation in age and culture and we all get along well."

Nancy McDowall, administrator at Highway Terraces, has been there for 17 years. She sees faith as a comforting force in senior's lives. "They're more at peace," she said, noting that she sees differences in people when they are visited. "They're more comfortable at this stage of life with a spiritual reminder. They may have been away from church for many years, but finally are comforted."

Perhaps this service—this gift of comfort in final days—is one of the greatest gifts the church can give. "The spirit within us is made to connect with the spirit that is within others," said Morris, speaking at last year's Dreambuilder's Conference. "We care for their spirit in a particular way because endings are beginnings. We make them feel warm and loved and comforted."

Creating caring communities

"CREATING CARING COMMUNITIES" is the mantra at the Bethany Care Society, the non-profit organization serving more than 3,400 Alberta seniors and people with disabilities. Using a holistic approach that emphasizes dignity and respect, Bethany has been providing care, housing and community services for such people and their families for 60 years. Founded by five men—two of them ministers—Bethany has grown to include 1,250 staff and 950 volunteers, with six care centres, three independent-living properties, a home-care program and a response service for medical or personal needs.

Faith has been an integral part of Bethany's operations since its inception, and in 1971, the pastoral care department was established. Today, the department is headed by Rev. Jean Morris, director of spirituality and pastoral care services, and currently Moderator of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. She chose seniors' issues as one of her moderatorial themes, advocating for attention to seniors' needs both inside and outside the church. During her congregational travels this past year, she said she has been encouraged by the positive response to these issues. Several presbyteries have invited her to conduct workshops on how congregations can offer practical help to people with dementia. "We want to be good at this," said Morris. "We want to provide care, but we're not always sure how. So it's good to learn of the struggles of congregations and brainstorm around it."

Morris is available for workshops on seniors' issues and their emotional, physical and spiritual needs, even after her year as moderator is over. Contact her at Bethany Calgary at (403) 210-4600 if your congregation is interested.

Intergenerational resources

Dorothy Henderson, associate secretary for Christian education and ministry with children, youth and families, is also a member of the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators. She believes strongly in intergenerational programs as a means of promoting education and community, and breaking down barriers and stereotypes. In the *Advocate*, APCE's quarterly publication, she lists things that churches can do to encourage such learning:

- establish an intergenerational planning team
- use a blended or alternative worship service
- ensure committees represent the various generations present at church
- plan intergenerational fun events as well as study groups
- host storytelling events where the generations share stories of growing up

Henderson recommends the following resources:

Worship Together: Planning and Conducting Intergenerational Worship—a video produced by Dorothy Henderson

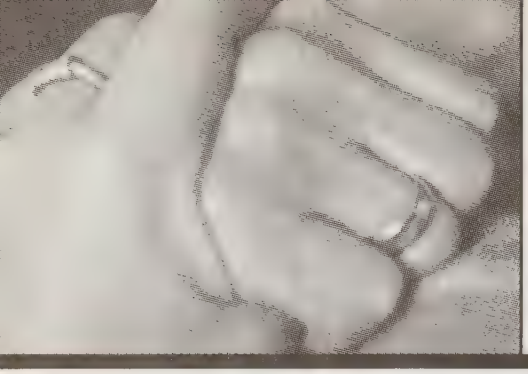
Worship for All Ages: Services for Special Sundays, by Ian MacDonald, Barb Tunnicliffe and Marilyn Perry—a collection of intergenerational worship services

One Church, Four Generations: Understanding and Reaching All Ages in Your Church, by Gary McIntosh

"B.J. and Emily" puppet plays—by Dorothy Henderson, to be used during worship services. They can be found online in past issues of *Equip* at www.presbyterian.ca/rpc/pcpak/index.html

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Dorothy Henderson and Lisa-Dawn McKenzie are co-authors in a soon-to-be-published resource containing background information on all-ages learning and 20 multi-generational lessons. Contact Henderson at dhenderson@presbyterian.ca or 1-800-619-7301 ext. 271 to learn more about intergenerational opportunities.



BY LISA M. PETSCHE

Blessed are the caregivers

The first rule of thumb to avoid burnout: take care of yourself

Jack, 80, was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease three years ago. His 75-year-old wife, Agnes, is finding it increasingly difficult to care for him. He is starting to get his days and nights reversed, sleeping during the day and remaining wide awake at night. He slipped out of the house on one occasion and couldn't find his way home; Agnes had to call the police to help find him. She can no longer leave Jack alone for even a short time.

The contribution of informal caregivers like Agnes often goes unrecognized. Yet these unpaid helpers provide practical assistance and enhance the quality of life for ill older people who might otherwise require placement in a long-term care facility. Typically, they are spouses or children; many are seniors themselves. The majority are women.

A common phenomenon is burnout, due to the physical toll of caring for someone who is ill and the emotional strain of dealing with the suffering and deterioration of a loved one. Emotional red flags are frequent crying; frequent irritation by small annoyances; difficulty controlling one's temper; feeling overwhelmed; a sense of hopelessness; and feelings of inadequacy. In severe cases, burnout can lead to abuse of the care recipient; this signals the need for immediate help.

If you are a caregiver, here are a dozen strategies to keep stress manageable and prevent burnout:

• Look after yourself: eat nutritious meals, get adequate rest, exercise and see your family doctor regularly.

• Give yourself a break every day—enjoy a cup of tea, read something uplifting, write in a journal, call a friend, listen to music—whatever works for you.

• Stay connected to your friends and your faith community.

• Simplify your life. Set priorities and don't waste time or energy on unimportant things.

• Accept the reality of the illness. There is nothing you can do to stop it.

• Don't get overwhelmed; there will be good days and bad days and what you can give may vary from day to day.



You are only human. Give yourself permission to feel all the emotions that surface, including resentment and frustration

• You are only human. Give yourself permission to feel all the emotions that surface, including resentment and frustration. Don't be too hard on yourself when you lose patience.

• Acknowledge that you can't—and shouldn't—do it all alone. Find at least one person you can talk to openly. Accept offers of help. Ask other family members to share the load. Be specific about the kind of help you need.

• Talk with other caregivers. Join a community support group (some offer concurrent care), or an online group if it's hard to get out.

• Take full advantage of respite services in your community, such as adult daycare programs and facilities that offer temporary residential care.

• Learn as much as possible about the illness and its management and educate family and friends to help them understand.

• Don't promise your loved one you will never place him or her in a long-term-care facility, since you don't know what the future holds.

If you are not a caregiver, but know someone who is, try to:

• Keep in touch, recognizing that you may have to make most of the effort in maintaining the relationship.

• Listen without judgment and don't give unsolicited advice. Provide encouragement.

• Give practical support: Send over a casserole or muffins. Offer to pick up groceries, run errands or perform household chores such as mowing the lawn. Provide respite to allow her to get out, ideally on a regular basis.

• Offer to get information about community support services if none are in place, and encourage their use.

• Pray that God will give her strength and guidance in carrying out her role with grace, including making wise decisions.

• Support her if she pursues placement in a care facility, for it is a difficult decision often followed by feelings of guilt. Do whatever you can to help her—and her loved one—with the transition.

Lisa Petsche is a freelance writer.

PWSDevelopments

a newsletter of Presbyterian World Service & Development Spring 2006



Above: Sleeping mats being distributed in a tent city in Pakistan. Back: A tent city of earthquake affected people where ACT is working.

Moving beyond the disaster

On October 8, 2005, a massive earthquake shook parts of Pakistan, India and Afghanistan, killing 80,000 and leaving three million people homeless. Harsh winter weather, mountainous terrain and communities that were already in extreme poverty before the quake have made the relief effort particularly challenging. PWS&D is helping Action by Churches Together (ACT) provide food, water, clothing, winterized tents and medical treatment in the large camps that have emerged to house displaced people.

Behind the statistics are people determined to survive and rebuild their lives. Fatima Bibi lost her house, livestock and crops in the small village of Kanshian. As soon as Fatima, her husband and nine children had settled in the Hassa camp, she sent her husband back to search for her most cherished belonging – her sewing machine. Damaged in the rubble, Fatima was determined to repair it. Not surprising to those who have met her, Fatima succeeded. Now she is sewing clothes in the camp and earning enough money to support her family and meet their daily expenses.

Rajiq is a gentle, kind hearted man who is well liked and always surrounded by children. In the quake Rajiq lost his mother, his house, his animals and his shop where he sold clothes and groceries. Rajiq is also determined to rebuild. He has opened a small kiosk in the camp where he and his wife sit selling small goods while their young daughters play nearby. He is hopeful that the money earned from the kiosk will help him build his house again in another place.

Part of the challenge of relief and rehabilitation work is to keep the spirit of hope alive within people deeply traumatized by the disaster. The courage and determination of Fatima and Rajiq helps make this possible in such a challenging environment.

photos: Paul Jeffrey, ACT

After the disaster: building hope

photo: Guy Smagghe, PWS&D



Photos (clockwise from above): 1) Women in Indintakarai who were helped to start a cooperative business drying and processing fish to earn an income. 2) Water provided by ACT to a "tent city" for earthquake survivors outside Balakot, Pakistan. 3) Amir Shahzad (left) and Saeed Khan learn electrical wiring at a training center for people affected by the earthquake in Mansehra, Pakistan. 4) Some of the 450 houses being built in Indintakarai, South India.

Over a year since the tsunami slammed into the coastline of the Indian ocean, PWS&D continues to rebuild homes, communities and livelihoods.

The village of Indintakarai, in the Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu, South India is one of the villages being rebuilt as part of a special Canadian ecumenical effort through Action by Churches Together (ACT). The project is financed by Canadian Presbyterian, United, Anglican and Mennonite (PUMA) churches with $6 million in matching funds from the Canadian government. In addition to the government funds, the churches have provided another $3 million to ACT's appeal, which in total has raised over $82 million from churches around the world for tsunami relief work in India, Indonesia and Sri Lanka.

In Indintakarai, ACT has provided fishing boats and nets, rebuilt houses and restored livelihoods. In addition, special programs are helping communities – particularly children – cope with post-tsunami trauma.

PWS&D Program Coordinator Guy Smagghe visited the village of Indintakarai, in November 2005, where 450 houses were under construction. "Watching hundreds of disaster-resistant houses coming up at the same time was certainly impressive," he says. These are part of 737 tsunami-resistant homes the PUMA churches are building in six villages in Tirunelveli. In addition, five multi-purpose shelters will be rebuilt and 13 schools are under repair. When the construction is complete, the government will provide the utilities and other infrastructure.

In addition to helping restore the livelihoods of fishing families through the provision of boats and nets, the Canadian churches are helping many people who were indirectly affected by the tsunami – including squid fishers, market venders and others – build livelihoods that help them live with dignity. ACT has started various training programs and small cooperatives as alternative income generating activities. In one unique project they are helping over 100 polio-affected people establish a business collecting seaweed to sell.

"I visited one group of women in Indintakarai who were



selling snacks that they prepared and packaged. Their enthusiasm was contagious." Guy explains. The income generating activities also help families weather the ups and downs of the fishing industry.

Women are often hardest hit by emergencies, and can be the first to be ignored in relief and reconstruction work. "I was impressed by the deliberate efforts our partners are making to help women's voices be heard in the relief and rehabilitation work. The women often identified issues the men were not familiar with," Guy explains.

The positive experience the Canadian churches had working together on the tsunami project was repeated after an earthquake struck the Kashmir region of India and Pakistan in October 2005. This time the Pentecostal and Christian Reformed churches joined the PUMA churches to help ACT provide winterized tents, traditional heaters, shelter kits, food packages, water, winter clothing, medical services and sanitation facilities in difficult-to-reach communities. In addition to the funds raised in their churches, the six churches accessed $750,000 from the Canadian International Development Agency, $100,000 from the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation and $30,000 from Saskatchewan Council for International Cooperation for this relief project.

Emergencies can be catalysts for change. They can create new patterns of work and relationships. Incorporating development principles into both relief and rehabilitation work can help rebuild communities to make them stronger than before the disaster. In rebuilding the houses in tsunami ravaged Tirunelveli, India, young men and women were selected for training as masons – giving them a skill they can use in the future to earn an income. In Mansehra, Pakistan, ACT established a training center for those affected by the earthquake to receive training in carpentry, electrical wiring, plumbing, welding and masonry. These will help in the rebuilding and reconstruction process. In the end, building stronger communities helps people withstand future disasters – and helps combat the ongoing disaster of chronic poverty.

– Karen Plater, PWS&D



photo: Paul Jeffrey, ACT



photo: Mark Beech, ACT



photo: Guy Smallwood, PWS&D

Toward a World without AIDS

This face represents hope for me. Although people continue to live in despair, the children are often smiling. This would make the very difficult days a little bit easier. Michelle Miller, youth leader, Rosedale Presbyterian Church, Toronto, ON

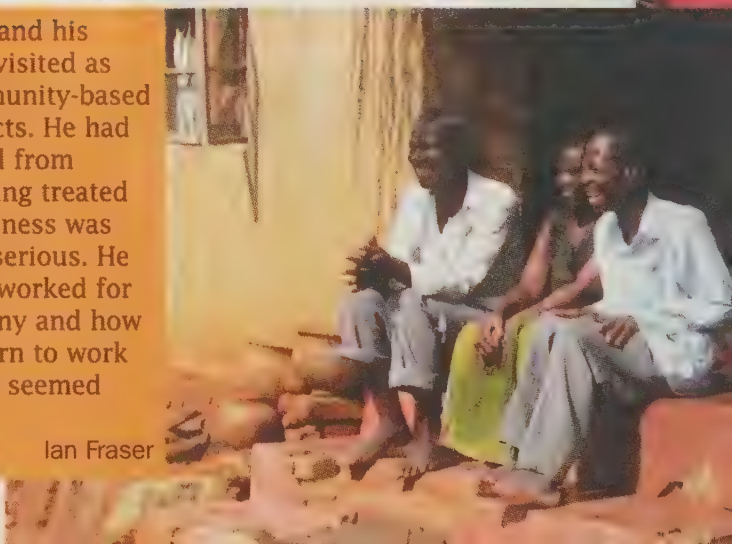
In November 2005, twenty-four representatives from The Presbyterian Church in Canada visited partners in Malawi and Tanzania to see the impact that HIV and AIDS was having there. While they were there, they learned what our partners are doing in response to HIV and AIDS and provided solidarity and encouragement for their work.



The Canadians met home-based care volunteers who spend hours caring for families and individuals struggling with AIDS. They played with the children at the daycare centers that provide care and meals for children aged two to five: 60 per cent of whom are orphans. They saw essential agriculture and water programs in a country in the midst of severe drought. They met women who were leading change in places where the voice of women were often ignored.

The commitment of our Presbyterian partners astounded the Canadians – and they determined to bring the stories back to Canada. Here they share some of their favorite photos with you. *(See also p. 30)*

– Karen Plater, PWS&D



This man (right) and his wife were being visited as part of the community-based home care projects. He had recently returned from hospital after being treated for TB, but his illness was obviously more serious. He spoke of having worked for the water company and how he hoped to return to work soon. The reality seemed quite different.

Ian Fraser



We were all touched by the enthusiasm and innocence of the children of Malawi, and it is for this reason that I associate this picture (to the left) with the goodness that PWS&D is part of by helping this community and these children. Laura Ramsey youth leader, Tyne Valley Presbyterian Church, PEI



This field has been tilled by hand and the furrows are ready for planting, as the people wait for the rains to come. It is part of a sustainable agriculture project where the community is using legumes to improve the soil and their diet. This particular field is farmed collectively to support the community's orphan care program. Seed banks and nutrition and health education are other components in this project to help combat hunger.

Gordon Timbers, minister, Unionville Presbyterian Church, ON



I call this the field of hope! Here in the midst of a very long dry season we saw evidence of what can be done with training, irrigation, and seed.

The picture below is of two children outside the "Tethandizane" orphan care centre (Tethandizane means "Let us help one another") This scene is repeated often in Malawi -- children looking after children! Bonnie Wynn, minister, Knox, Harvey Station and Acton Presbyterian Churches, NB



Groups of women often greeted us with song and dance. This group from a congregation near Mzuzu sang us away after we met with them. Voices and dancing are forever imprinted on my mind. Ian Fraser, minister, St. Columba-on-the-Lake Presbyterian Church, PQ



Lean on Me

A church sponsors a refugee

by Colleen McCue, PWS&D

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Fergus, Ont., discovered the power of transformation when they began the process to sponsor a young Somali refugee displaced from her home as a result of war.

Marian was one of over 1.5 million people uprooted from Somalia by civil war. She had been left for dead in January 1991, after gunmen invaded her home shooting Marian, her father and nine-year-old brother. Her father and brother were killed. Marian's mother, older brothers and sisters escaped, thinking Marian was also dead. While her injuries were very serious – her leg broken and shrapnel fragments imbedded throughout her body – she managed to survive. Neighbours found her and cared for her, eventually carrying her with them to a refugee camp in Kenya.

Over the next nine years, Marian lived in four different refugee camps in Kenya. She finally ended up in Nairobi where she found that she faced new dangers as police and other vigilantes often take advantage of anyone without proper identification.

It was in Nairobi in 2002 that Marian made a connection with Terry Smith, a committed refugee advocate in the Waterloo-Wellington Presbytery. Terry asked St. Andrew's if they were willing to help. The paperwork was submitted and the wheels of the immigration system began to turn – though very slowly.

On September 28, 2004, Marian arrived at the Toronto airport. At the Immigration office a man wearing a nametag called her by name and asked if she recognized him. Originally from Somalia, he and Marian had been in the same refugee camp in Kenya in 1995. He now lives in Toronto, working for the federal government to help refugees as they arrive at the airport. After gathering her suitcase and helping her through the admissions process, he gave Marian his telephone number and asked her to keep in touch.



Shot and left for dead in Somalia, Marian now has a new home in Canada.

Meanwhile, Doug and Pauline Hall and Rev. David Whitecross were anxiously waiting for Marian to emerge through the arrival gates. Pauline recalls, "She seemed so small and alone in her black hijab (the headcovering worn by Muslim women) and as I walked to the car with my arm around her shoulders, I knew that the whole process had been guided by God."

Marian moved in with the Halls and very quickly became like another daughter to them. Other members of St. Andrew's rallied around to help in the integration process. Volunteers took turns ferrying Marian to Guelph for English classes. Marian's positive attitude and sense of humour helped break down barriers and she soon had many friends among the congregation.

The injuries Marian suffered in Somalia continued to plague her. A doctor in Elora agreed to take her as a patient. She was eventually referred to an orthopaedic surgeon in Hamilton where she had major surgery to repair the leg which had been shattered in 1991. Finally, after so many years, Marian is almost free of pain. Although she continues to wear a special brace on her leg, she is getting around very well.

Still, even as Marian made so much progress in her new country she longed to contact her family again. Then, in early 2005, a friend in Nairobi told her that he was returning to Somalia. Marian asked him to visit her home. The young man called from Mogadishu to report that her old home had been demolished; but that a neighbour thought she knew where a sister of Marian's was living. He promised to let Marian know what he found out.

A week later he called to say that not only had he found Marian's sister, but her mother as well. Marian's mother at first couldn't believe she was alive. "You must be mistaken since my Marian was killed in 1991," she told him. Even after he explained what had happened, she still could not believe it. Then, after two weeks of trying, Marian was able to get through to her mother on the phone and speak to her family for the first time in 14 years. It was a wonderful moment as the Hall family gathered around Marian. Pauline reports that there was not a dry eye in the house!

Marian attends a mosque in Guelph. She has also been welcomed into the community of St. Andrew's. Marian and the Halls have had many interesting discussions about the similarities and differences of their faiths and have developed a mutual respect for one another.

With a spirit of quiet determination that has carried her through life, Marian continues to study English and is talking about attending college or university. Marian has a part time job at a chocolate store in Fergus and is diligently saving as much as possible to help realize that goal.

When asked about their hopes for Marian, Doug and Pauline Hall say "she will stay with us for as long as she needs and wants to. She is family and we thank God that he brought her to us."



Marian with Doug and Pauline Hall.

Continue to love each other like brothers and sisters, and remember always to welcome strangers, for by doing this, some people have entertained angels without knowing it.
Hebrews 13:1-2



A distribution of water containers, mats and blankets by Action by Churches Together (ACT) in the Salam Camp for internally displaced people in Darfur, Sudan. PWS&D continues to support ACT's work in Darfur.

photo: Paul Jeffrey, ACT

In addition to helping Canadian Presbyterian churches sponsor refugees to come to Canada PWS&D helps refugees and internally displaced people:

- Through the provision of food, shelter and education to people displaced by war, famine and natural disasters.
- By helping provide housing, seeds and tools and income generating programs for refugees or internally displaced people who are returning home.

Presbyterian World Service & Development
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The Chigodi Women's Center's enlightening educational program can be seen in the faces of the women – young and old – who attended. Here is hope and empowerment for people who had been taught subservience.

Dave and Heather Mansell, lay leaders, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Arnprior, Ontario

photo: Jim Spark, PWS&D

Making the connection

We have just completed the 6-week study *Making Connections – Towards a World without AIDS* by Karen Plater. I wanted to let you know that we were very pleased with the curriculum. We found that it was carefully thought out and was organized in a manner that engaged the participants as individuals, small groups and a large group. The activities worked very well and provided lots of variety. People were surprised that they had so much "fun" with such a horrendous topic.

We particularly appreciated the stories from our partners. These put a face to HIV/AIDS and helped us to appreciate the kinds of projects and programs that are making a difference in the lives of people in Malawi, Kenya and India.

Each Monday evening 12-14 people met for supper followed by worship and study. This was probably the largest study we have had at our church (membership of 80). Many of these people had not participated in a study before.

As leaders we were amazed at the creativity of people as they made up skits, interviews and ads to tell the stories and share the facts. This is something that we had never tried before and it worked really well. We learned a lot about each other, as well as about HIV and AIDS.

The worship portions were very carefully prepared and linked with the theme of each session. We had good discussions around them as well. The film *A Closer Walk* – borrowed from PWS&D – was excellent and tied in with all the themes. In future I would use the DVD, which is 85 minutes, as a session on its own, rather than as part of one of the set sessions.

Each week we shared information with the congregation through bulletin board displays, readings from the front or write-ups in the calendar.

We ended the study with a Friday evening potluck using recipes from Malawi, Kenya and North India and displaying the PWS&D photo exhibit. A speaker involved in an HIV/AIDS project with sex trade workers in Kenya shared their experience and photos with us. This mission night was a wonderful culmination of our study.

The exhibit was then opened to the public on Saturday and Sunday. We encouraged people to make donations to the Towards a World without AIDS campaign at the mission night and photo exhibit and we were very pleased with the response.

Although Howie and I had little prior knowledge of HIV/AIDS, the study had all the information, resources and suggestions we needed, with an organizational structure that worked effectively. I would highly recommend it to any congregation.

– Sue and Howie Simpson, lay leaders, Kildonan Community Church, MB

For more information or to make a donation write or call:
Presbyterian World Service & Development
50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, ON M3C 1J7
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Enclosed is my donation of $ _____ for PWS&D.

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____ I would like to receive PWSDevelopments regularly (free)

Retiring or returning?

His time in the pews was short lived

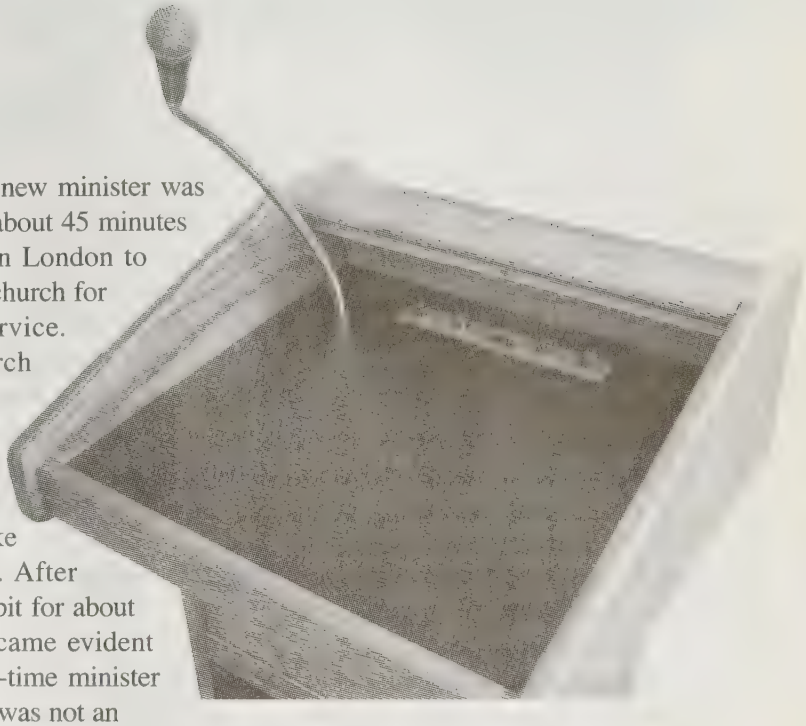
BY HUGH APPÉL

Do not be afraid of hard work for Christ; a terrible reckoning awaits those who have an easy time in the ministry, but a great reward is in reserve for those who endure things for the elect's sake.

—CHARLES SPURGEON

We spent the entire summer at our summer place. It felt great to sit next to Jane in the pew on Sundays, something that had not happened over my career as a minister, the last 14 years of which were spent at Knox, Wallaceburg, Ont. Retirement is a wonderful invention. It gives the ability to enjoy the things we never had time for before. With all the extra time at our hands we looked for a place to volunteer and help out. We began working two mornings a week at the London Food Bank, a busy place serving about 2,500 families a month. Jane worked at the reception desk and I interviewed the clients and set up profiles on the computer. I enjoy meeting people and this gave us an opportunity to practice what we preach. At times it was heartbreaking to listen to the people in need of help. And there were calls to do some pulpit supply in the London Presbytery. Jane got involved in music and teaching courses.

But then, I received a phone call from a minister in the presbytery telling me that he was leaving the two-point charge he was serving and asking if I could preach there for four weeks. It is the task of the minister who is leaving to find supply for about a month until presbytery has appointed an interim moderator. It worked out just fine so I agreed and was glad to oblige. At the invitation of the interim moderator, Rev. Amanda Birchall, we agreed to continue to supply the pulpit until a new minister was inducted. It took about 45 minutes from our home in London to arrive at the first church for the 9:30 a.m. service. The second church is at 11 a.m. Both congregations were very caring and went out of their way to make us feel welcome. After supplying the pulpit for about 15 months, it became evident that finding a full-time minister for a rural charge was not an easy task. Although we were not involved with anything but preaching, it was not all that difficult to notice the frustration. Although the thought had never crossed our minds, we began to wonder if God was telling us something. At first I kept thinking that I was imagining it. "No way would God want us to be involved."



'But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be proclaimed ... To Him be the glory forever and ever' (II Timothy: 4)

After all, we were retired. We began to pray that God would give us the answer needed and it came. We spoke to the interim moderator and met with the search committee. We shared with them our thoughts. We agreed that the call would be on a part-time basis for two years. It would give all of us time to re-evaluate the future of the charge and make some plans together. The presbytery agreed wholeheartedly with the proposal and it felt good to sense a strong and prayerful support for the task I never planned for.

Although I found it difficult to believe this was really happening, I felt encouraged in the words of the Apostle Paul, "But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be proclaimed. To Him be the glory forever and ever." (II Timothy: 4)

Through God's grace we have discovered that the gifts we receive do not retire and have learned that we are called to use them when given the opportunity. We have also discovered that there seems to be a new sense of enthusiasm in the two-point charge and that being retired is no hindrance to serving with God's people in His church. The words of Charles Spurgeon have become clear too. Coming out of retirement is teaching me all over again that we are challenged in the service of Christ for the sake of those in need to be brought to the cross. I guess I am a student all over again.

Hugh Appél is a part-time minister at Argyle, Crinan and Duff, Largie.

The Spirit made him do it

Prescience, prayer and the power of God led a young doctor to India

BY IAN CUNNINGHAM

My wife, Irene and I (and two young children) returned to Canada in 1960, having lived and worked in India for five years. Not the mystic land of Rimski-Korsakoff's "Song of India" but village India, hot, dry, just one monsoon failure away from famine. The barren hills on the north side of the Narboda river are the home of tribesmen known as Bhils: Rudyard Kipling knew them as wild and independent people of the forest. They were our neighbours, our seat mates at church, our nursing and technical staff and our patients.

On market day they would come with their goods to sell goats, berries, grindstones and hand-woven baskets, all loaded into ox-carts. In cotton turban, vest and loin cloth and usually barefooted the men drove the oxen with their wives and children huddled in the cart.

Once a week, then, two or three of these ox-carts surrounded our out-patient department. Inside the men would be hunkered down on the benches and in the carts we would find a woman in prolonged labour, a sick and dehydrated child hidden in his mother's cotton sari or a man emaciated from tuberculosis. It was a busy medical practice.

The hospital, known then as the Canadian Presbyterian Mission Hospital and, at this date, simply the Mission Hospital, has won the trust of the Bhil community. Thirty years of service, expanding from a dispensary to 60 beds, a surgical suite and an obstetrical ward has established the hospital's reputation.

Dr. Robert McLure (distinguished physician and, in retirement, moderator of the United Church) ran a modern hospital in Ratlam, only a day's travel away from us. Thanks to him, I learned how to come to grips with my responsibilities as physician-in-charge of our hospital. Indeed, so rich and challenging was the medical work that a cynic might accuse me of exaggeration. This certainly was not the case and my experiences of awesome successes or heart-breaking failures were not so striking and mysterious as the story of how I became a missionary doctor.

I was the intern on call for the private patient's pavillion of the Toronto Western Hospital, the night nurse on the seventh floor wanted an IV restarted.

Eerie tales raised questions about my credibility and sanity

At the desk, she whispered, "Dr. Laird operated on this woman this morning; she's full of cancer. We have been giving her morphine and the doctor wants the drip to run. She's pretty drowsy. The tray is at the bedside." Terse. Very professional and very sad. Nobody was optimistic about this woman's future.

By the light of the bedside lamp, I laid out the tray and turned to the woman who was obviously jaundiced, lying on her side with her eyes closed, barely awake. "I am Dr. Cunningham. Dr. Laird wants the IV restarted," I said.

Still lying on her side, she opened her eyes, and said, "And so you're going to India."

I am sure I stammered my reply, "Well, not India, but I am looking overseas for a job. I gave up on India years ago. But of all the interns in the hospital, how could you know that I was even looking overseas for work?" She replied in a weak whisper, "Some people say I am psychic that way." And she drifted off into a kind of sleep. I set up the IV, fastened a support to her arm and left, feeling really shaken.

I told my roommate and I told Irene about this episode and how it had disconcerted me. I told no one else. Eerie tales, I found, raised questions about my credibility and sanity.

And yet, at that time I was in conversation with the Quakers about their work overseas. Their quiet accounts of adventures and good works in Europe and Asia thrilled me. Despite their need for a physician in war-torn Seoul, they knew, I am sure, as I had begun to feel, that a part-time Presbyterian wouldn't quite fit in.

Presbyterian, yes! I remembered and phoned to inquire what work the church supported. On a Monday afternoon I shook hands with Rev. Jim Monro, who greeted me by saying, "So glad to meet you, Dr. Cunningham. Why just yesterday we had a day of prayer for a doctor for our hospital in India." Wow, two shots over my bow! Too many coincidences, and coming fast! I wanted to run but I stayed and warmed to the possibilities and took comfort and reassurance from meeting people whom I came to respect.

So that's how I became a missionary doctor. My church friends see my experience as the working of the Holy Spirit by means of an episode of prescience and exercise of prayer.

However, it seems to me that there were causes more in need of divine intervention than a small mission hospital and my career. Still, why me?

And, at this time in my life, I am no longer a part-time Presbyterian. Being in church I continue to explore the mysteries of God, working in our lives.

Now retired, Dr. Cunningham lives in Ottawa.



In Praise of Fair Trade

(sung to the tune of *While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks By Night*)
by Rev. Wendy Paterson, Windsor, Ont.

The coffee brews, aroma's fine,
We wait now 'til it's poured.
It's good to know with every sip
The workers aren't ignored.

The beans are grown with special care,
The land is not abused.
The farmers' costs increase each year,
How can they be refused?

The coffee growers need a wage
Providing for their needs.
With clothes to buy and mouths to feed,
It's human rights, not greed.

Our God expects us to be fair
And just in how we live,
To buy and drink the Fair Trade brands
Is one small right to give.

We praise you God for all your gifts,
For workers far and near.
Teach us respect for all who serve,
Through every passing year.

You can hear the Fair Trade Choir sing this song on our website: www.presbyterianrecord.ca



Fair Trade Coffee

Limericks by Geoff Johnston
Sketches by Mary Lou Johnston
Knox, Dunnville, Ont.

When the life of the day is just forming,
On a counter nearby there is warming
For the day that is new
A brew that is true,
A beverage fit for the morning.



But the coffee to which we're addicted,
By the vice of the time is afflicted.
The masters of trade
Assure they are paid,
And the share of the farmers restricted.



So just think, friend, the next time you brew it,
That this time there's no need to rue it,
For the people who try
To be fair when they buy
Give a life to the family that grew it.

Other submissions from last month's Mocha Mission contest will be published in future issues of the Record.

michael coren

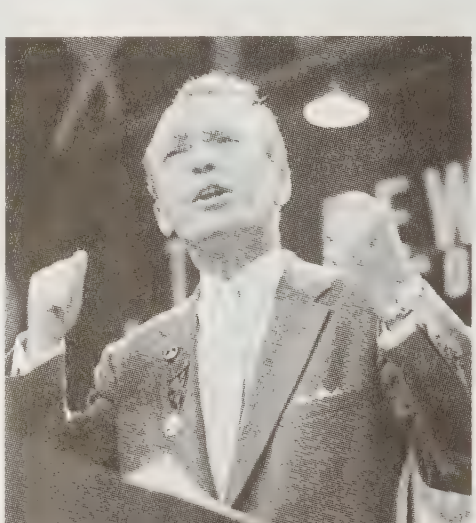
Separating logic from lunacy

Liberal self-absorption shuts out Christian voices

Every few years or so the culture presents us with another empty mantra, intended to dismiss opponents of the status quo and ridicule their arguments. Not long ago we had the racism fetish. Conservatives and everybody else on the assumed right were racist and their policies based on racism.

Remove racist and insert sexist, homophobic or fascist. The same intention and, sadly, often the same result.

The reaction to political correctness made all that seem rather stale. So the establishment moved on to the grand rallying cry of the need to separate church and state. We hear it all the time, repeatedly used to support anti-Christian views and silence opposition. Which is why Canadian Christians need to be particularly concerned.


Rev. Tommy Douglas

The very people who obsess about the separation of church and state tend to worship at the altar of Canadian nationalism, public broadcasting and education and, most of all, socialized medicine

Thing is, the entire concept is nonsensical in contemporary Canada. Worse than that, it's American. Yes, the country the liberals love to hate developed the notion of separating the state from the church. And it did so not to support the state but to protect the church.

The United States was founded by evangelical Christians who had suffered directly or through their forefathers from state persecution. A major aspect of this persecution had been the Church of England, the established church that had made life so very difficult for non-conformist Protestants and Roman Catholics.

In fact the entire separation idea was based on allowing religious influence by excluding one specific church denomination from dominating an entire culture. It was never supposed to protect the state from religion, in particular Christianity, because the founders of the United States did not believe that any such protection was necessary.

On the contrary, they saw religious faith as being an essential safeguard on the power and influence of the state. How correct they were. The leaders of the campaign against slavery were Christians and the people who forced President Lincoln's hand both before and during the Civil War were motivated by their Christian zeal.

A century later it was the church, organized and militant but non-violent, that under the guidance of Martin Luther King Jr. and a host of Christian leaders thrust the civil rights movement into the consciousness of the American people. The government, the courts and the media merely followed the lead of the church.

When people today claim that they do not want church interference in their lives or the life of the state, however, all they really mean is that they do not want to listen to anyone who disagrees with them. Moaning on about church and state separation makes them feel as if their arguments carry some intellectual weight.

What is selfish is made to sound grand. What is merely political is made to sound philosophical. They would rather indulge their own complacency than allow people of faith to hold up a mirror and reflect the increasing moral flabbiness of the secular world.

That is particularly sad in this country and startlingly ironic. The very people who obsess about the separation of church and state tend to worship at the altar of Canadian nationalism, public broadcasting and education and, most of all, socialized medicine.

The latter, of course, owes an incalculable debt to the great Tommy Douglas who was an ordained Baptist minister and evangelical Christian, motivated in his politics and campaigns by his faith and the need to inject church teachings into the Canadian state.

So if we use the logic of the contemporary liberal, Tommy Douglas should have shut up and minded his own business. As should, to name just a few, William Wilberforce when he worked to end slavery in the British empire, Lord Shaftsbury when he led the struggle against child labour and the Catholic monk Titus Brandsma who gave his life to rescue Jews in occupied Holland.

Frankly, I doubt if much of this will make any difference to some of the fiercest critics of the church today. Hey, why bother to think when you can shout? The separation of logic and lunacy.

Michael Coren's website is www.michaelcoren.com.

PHOTO: DUNCAN CAMERON, NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA

Raising awareness in sacred places

A church remains active and involved because AIDS is not going away

BY AMY MACLACHLAN

Some congregations support food banks. Others raise funds for HIV/AIDS programs. St. George's, London, Ont., does both. The congregation has partnered with the AIDS Committee of London for the past eight years, helping the agency operate its Country Cupboard food bank for people living with HIV.



There are increasing numbers of orphans in Malawi, largely due to the AIDS pandemic sweeping sub-Saharan Africa. These are children from an orphan care program in Blantyre Synod.

"St. George's has shown itself to be a leader in responding to the AIDS pandemic and is an example to other Christian communities," said Chris McInnis, director of community development at ACOL. He and executive director Peter Hayes added St. George's to the agency's honour roll last June.

The congregation collects food and toiletries for the Country Cupboard every Sunday. Vitamins and specialty products are also donated. One member helped build the cupboard's current facility. "The whole congregation is involved in the fundraising," said Rev. Keith McKee. "They've really embraced it."

Money raised is split between ACOL (which receives 25 per cent) and the national church's Towards a World Without AIDS campaign. To date, St. George's has raised more than $3,000 through special events like roast beef dinners and chili lunches, a designated offering on Worldwide Communion Sunday and distributing coin boxes during Advent.

According to the Canadian Public Health Association, 11 people are infected with HIV in Canada everyday. To help raise awareness of this fact, St. George's hosted a World AIDS Day vigil last December. The event was a time to remember those in the community who had died from the disease.

The congregation also sponsored a ▶

Youth reach lofty goal

THE YOUTH at St. John's, Toronto, raised a whopping $10,000 for Towards a World Without AIDS last year. Spurred on by Christian education director Laurie McGugan, along with Ellen Moore and Michelle Ramsaran, both Sunday school teachers, about 15 teenagers raised money for the national church's AIDS project. At the urging of their minister, Rev. Charlotte Stuart, the team set the lofty goal of $10,000 in the fall of 2004. With a final push last September, they reached the target. The youth organized numerous projects, including putting together cookie ingredient jars that were sold at Christmas and Valentine's Day, hosting Sunday lunches (using donated ingredients), holding an AIDS-themed service with a special offering taken and participating in a 30-hour famine. "We originally said we'd try for $5,000, but Charlotte told us to aim higher," said Moore. "She said if we don't reach it right away, we can just keep trying."



Set a goal, use your imagination, work hard: That was the winning strategy employed by the smiling youth at St. John's, Toronto.

screening in November of *A Closer Walk*, an American film on the global AIDS pandemic. Interviews with orphans, doctors, social workers, government leaders and NGO officials help tell the story of a world affected by AIDS.

McKee said the congregation often pours all of its efforts into specific projects for long periods, and it will eventually direct these efforts elsewhere. "We will always be involved with PWS&D though," he said, "because AIDS is not going away."

Sarnia addresses Kenyan challenge

AFTER REV. TERRY SAMUEL and his wife, Susan, returned from a 12-week trip to Kenya in 1999, the congregation at St. Giles, Sarnia, Ont., wanted to help tackle the tragedy of AIDS in Africa. "We saw the difference between the haves and have-nots in the world," said Samuel, of his trip to Africa. "We saw the challenges. We met many families suffering from AIDS losses."

Moved by the Samuel's stories, the congregation began a twinning relationship with a parish in Kenya led by Rev. Joseph Mothaly. Mothaly is a member of the Presbyterian Church in East Africa, and has visited St. Giles three times since the partnership began. In addition to his parish duties, Mothaly teaches AIDS awareness and prevention in Kenya, and last year travelled to the United States for a course in clinical/pastoral education. He works closely with Dr. Rick Allen, who is also from Sarnia and works as a missionary in Kenya through International Ministries.

St. Giles' mission and outreach committee has organized special fundraising events such as auctions, soup lunches, dinners and wine tours. The committee is also spearheading a six-week congregational study of HIV/AIDS during Lent. The Sunday school collects pennies and sends the money to children in Mothaly's church. Samuel said the congregation hopes it will one day be able to send some members to Kenya. "It's been an inspiring mission focus for the congregation," he said. "They got on board and stuck with it. We don't know where it's going, but it's going! Concern continues to be a big thing."



The children of St. Giles', Sarnia, Ont., raised and gave $700 for Rev. Joseph Mothaly of Kenya, whose congregation the church supports.

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The best is yet to come

A middle-aged man reconsiders his ideas about aging, but not cheesecake

Let me ask you a question. It's been on my mind since a friend asked it during our bi-weekly gathering of the Circle of Six. If you haven't heard of us yet, allow me to explain that we are six handsome middle-aged men who get together every other Wednesday to sample chocolate cheesecakes and consider deep questions such as, "I wonder if we should go on a diet?"

Of course we discuss other things, too. Lately, for instance, we've been talking about aging. The discussion started with an interesting question. A question I'd like you to consider.

Do you look forward to growing old?

Of course, all of us in the Circle of Six had a different answer. Personally, I did my best to avoid the question as long as I could by stuffing my mouth full of cheesecake. *Age is relative*, I thought. Fifty is old when you're 15, but not when you're 90. Furthermore, aging is the one thing we can't do anything about. If we're alive, we're aging. The alternative to aging is not a good thing. But sooner or later I had to answer the question. And I admitted that I don't look forward to growing old.

But consider for a minute some who paint an entirely different picture of the aging process. Although not on the level of Noah, who fathered three children after turning 500 and completed the ark 100 years later, recent history is replete with the names of those who refuse to act their age. Those who, like the aging mosquito, aren't content to wait for an opening. They get in there and make one. Here are just a few:

- Leo Tolstoy learned to ride a bicycle at 67.
- At 75, Charles Schultz, creator of the *Peanuts* comic strip, was playing ice hockey.
- Claude Monet began painting his famous Water Lily series at 76, finishing the work at 85.
- Thomas Edison was 84 when he produced the telephone.
- In their 90s, pianist Artur Rubenstein and cellist Pablo Casals both performed professionally.
- Roget was updating his famous thesaurus when he died at 90.
- At 94, Leopold Stokowski signed a six-year recording contract.
- At 91, George Bernard Shaw was writing plays.
- At 100, Grandma Moses was painting pictures.
- And Tesichi Igarishi celebrated his 100th birthday by climbing to the 12,395-foot summit of Mount Fuji.

Recently a friend and I were contemplating the shared characteristics of elderly people we admire. People who make aging look attractive. Here is a short list we came up with:

1. They are thankful. Their conversation and their correspondence are marked with appreciation.
2. Their funnybones are intact. Their sense of humour is obvious, cultivated and welcome.
3. They show enthusiastic interest in the accomplishments of the younger generation. Change is not their enemy but their friend.
4. They keep their minds sharp. Scripture is on their minds and the newspaper is on the coffee table. Theirs is not the world of yesterday, but today.
5. They are big-picture people. They look at life from the largest point of view, resisting panic when terrible events grab the headlines.
6. They never retire. They may slow down and walk away from a job, but they still live life with a mission.
7. They are servants. They realize that if people are going to see the show, others will have to be backstage.
8. They are not afraid of death. It's not that dying doesn't bother them, but they fully understand Paul's words: "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain." (Philippians 1:21)



Since that meeting of the Circle of Six, I've done some reconsidering. And I've discovered that my idea of old age is changing. I used to think that life was lived on a hillside. That you went up, up, up, until you reached about 50, at which point you hit an unavoidable banana peel and began a swift descent down the other side.

Paul's words make me wonder if I've had it backwards. As we grow older, the things that matter in heaven should matter more on Earth. As we age, the stuff of Earth should lose its value. For the Christian, the best is yet to come. We may have slipped on a few banana peels, but there's cheesecake ahead.

Phil is a popular speaker and a best-selling author. Visit him at www.philcallaway.com

Scrambling away from the empty grave

Terrified, amazed and afraid at the possibility of resurrection

BY DAVID WEBBER



It was a dark, wet and lonely night. The taillights winked at us from the creek bottom deep in the canyon as we wound our way along the road above. There was no road down there. It didn't look good. I was terrified, but as we eventually drove our pickup truck along the Salmo-Creston highway to a point directly above those little twinkling lights, I knew I was going to have to go down there and look. I stopped, got out of the pickup and weakly asked Linda to pray. I could see the skid marks on the pavement. I gingerly clawed my way down the deep canyon. The trail of destruction left by whatever had gone over the edge was awful. I could see the red taillights and eventually I was able to scale the cliff down to what was left of a pickup truck. The body of a teenage girl lay in the shallow water of the creek, some of her clothes and both of her shoes torn off from impact. A teenage boy was holding another male teenager beside the truck. The boy was dead in the arms of his weeping brother, who had a broken hip.

The two dead bodies in the beam of my flashlight unnerved me, but oddly they did not freak me out. In fact, they seemed to capture my attention. Eventually the weeping and groaning of the lone survivor shocked me into action. I found some articles of clothing, covered the bodies as best I could, especially their faces, and went to work trying to help the survivor. Thank God an ambulance arrived sometime after that to take charge.

It was the end of my first summer as a student minister in the Nelson-Slocan area of British Columbia. I had become a Christian and was baptized a couple of years before. This was followed by a nasty bout with cancer, which together with my newfound faith in Christ, had forced me to the point of dealing with my own death. It was other people's deaths that scared me. I had spent the whole summer living in dread of a call from the hospital or funeral home. I had escaped death all summer. And then this.

That tragedy was 25 years ago. The bodies of that teenage brother and sister are burned into my memory. Since then I have had to deal with several other bodies. It is always an unnerving experience but when actually faced, seldom terrify-

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'Easter is not about the return of the robin in spring or blooming crocuses or butterflies coming out of their cocoons or any of that pagan drivel. It's about a body that somehow got loose'

ing. What makes it unnerving for me is the absolute finality of death. At the point of death there is nothing else you can do about life. You can only grieve. But somehow I naturally understand and accept that. It is the resurrection from death that scares me. And that begs a question.

How do we understand the resurrection of Jesus? At Easter it has been a tradition for Christian preachers to wax metaphorical about the resurrection of Jesus. I've done it too. Dead-looking seeds falling to the earth only to rise to new life in spring; ugly dead-looking bulbs springing to new life in a beautiful Easter lily; crusty brown and dead looking cocoons bringing forth beautiful and lively butterflies. But you know what? As I recall the two teenage bodies in that creek 25 years ago, these metaphors are not just weak, they are completely inappropriate. They don't treat death seriously enough. And if they don't treat death seriously enough, they will totally miss the point of the resurrection.

This Easter I have been trying to stand with the three women at the empty tomb in Mark's Gospel. They are totally weary with grief, and so am I. And so we should be. Death is something horribly final and unsettling in its power over life. But at least you can count on it. Grief is something I can understand, even embrace.

Then suddenly the women scramble away from the empty grave: terrified, amazed and afraid at the possibility of resurrection. I am running right with them too, horrified, shocked. No metaphor, parable or allegory can begin to covey what we feel. William Willimon put it well in *A Voice in the Wilderness: Clear Preaching in a Complicated World*: "Easter is not about the return of the robin in spring or blooming crocuses or butterflies coming out of their cocoons or any of that pagan drivel. It's about a body that somehow got loose. The Gospel accounts strain to describe what happened, but don't make any mistake about it, they're trying to describe something unearthly: death working backward. So I can't talk about the eternal rebirth of hope or Jesus living on in our hearts. We're talking about a dead Jew, crucified, who came back to harass us. And it scares the heck out of us!"

And you know what terrifies me the most? If I accept the resurrection of Jesus to be true and if I give my life over to follow him as Lord, all my definitions and reference points about life, especially death, have been ripped up. That absolutely freaks me out. And this Jesus, risen from the grave to harass me, is demanding that I live life with a completely different set of parameters, definitions and reference points. It is no longer life and death as I have it all figured out. Nothing can be the same anymore if I am to believe in and follow the Risen One. I have to reevaluate everything I have ever held to be true in life, including death. No wonder the Gospels describe the resurrection of Jesus in terrifying, earth-shaking terms and Paul speaks about it in terms of a personal new creation.

In practical terms, what this means to me is living a life full of risk, where death, and for that matter, nothing else in life, has any power over me. In practical terms, it means living out the teachings of the Risen One as literal and non-negotiable parameters for my life. Loving my enemies, praying for those who hate me, not resisting an evil doer, surrendering my possessions to those who would take them, going the second mile for one who would force me to go the first and all that other stuff in Matthew 5-7 that put the claim of holiness on my life—these can be ignored only by one who has not had life turned upside down by the Risen One. The Gospels were written and have to be read and lived in the light of the terrifying reality that Jesus is risen, He is risen indeed.

Rev. David Webber is a contributing editor to the *Record*. He is a minister of the Cariboo, B.C. house church ministry. His most recent book is *Like a Winter's Aspen: Embracing the Creator's Fire.*

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BANNERMAN, Rev. Gordon, passed away suddenly on January 16, 2006. Gordon became a candidate for ministry from First Presbyterian Church, New Glasgow, N.S. A funeral service was held in the Rockburn Presbyterian Church conducted by his nephew Rev. Gary Tonks, moderator of the Presbytery of Pictou, N.S. He is survived by his wife Marion of 50 years, daughter Vicky and three granddaughters. Gordon was a graduate of St. Francis Xavier University and Presbyterian College in Montreal.

DEATH, Arthur, long-time member and elder since 1944 of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Brampton, Ont. Art was born in Dixie, Ont. on May 17, 1913 and moved to Brampton in 1936 where he was an active member of the community for 65 years. He was an Ontario land surveyor and also a successful land developer. Art was a part of the transition of a small rural community to a vibrant city. Art was a pillar of strength and faith, always leading the way and showing determination and a strong will to live. Art leaves behind his wife of 68 years, Lois Helen (nee Stewart). He is also survived by four children, 14 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren.

HAYNES, Rodney, in his 92nd year died peacefully on January 28, 2006. Long-time member, elder and clerk of session at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Leaskdale, Ont. Rodney was an inspiration to both young and old in the congregation.

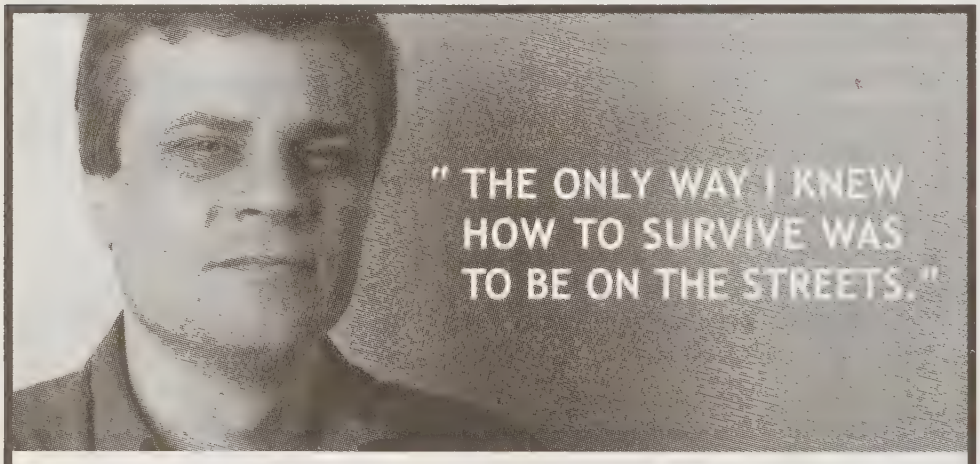
JOHNSTON, J. Garfield, passed away at home on February 2, 2006 in his 91st year. Garfield was a lifetime member of St. John's Presbyterian Church, MacLennan's Mountain, N.S. He was also a member of the Session and had served on the Board of Managers. He is survived by his wife Agnes, daughter Christine (Calvin) Mason, and sons Murray (Jeannie), Scott (Corinne), Rev. Grant (Sheila) and Ian and their families.

MACKAY, Rev. A. Ross, on January 3, 2006 in Montreal, Que. aged 88. Ross graduated from Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, U.S.A. with a Master of Divinity, followed by his M.A. in Philosophy from the University of Toronto, Ont. Upon ordination in 1942, he was called to St. Paul's Church, Woodstock, N.B. where he remained until 1947 when he moved to Montreal. In Montreal he served as minister to St. Cuthbert's and Outremont-Mount Royal. In 1958 he was appointed by the Board of World Missions as the Church Extension Secretary for the Presbytery of Montreal. In this position he oversaw the establishment of a number of congregations in the Montreal suburban areas. Later he was appointed Superintendent of Missions for the Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario. After his retirement in 1988, he remained active in Presbytery serving on a number of committees. He is survived by his wife Joycelyn, his three children and their spouses and eight grandchildren.

NESBITT, Rev. Wm. J., beloved husband of Irene, died suddenly on February 7, 2006 at the age of 77. He served the congregations of Wanham and Blueberry Mountain, Alta.; Fort MacLeod and Jumbo Valley, Alta.; Richmond and Stittsville, Ont.; and Aylmer, Que. He worked as a librarian for the federal government. Since retirement, he was an active member of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Ottawa, Ont. Besides Irene, he leaves to mourn his son Mark (Sandy); daughter Elizabeth (Stephen) Clarke and three grandchildren.

BACK ISSUES

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Feeling dazed and confused

Our most intimate experiences of worship are being transformed by technology

BY CHARLES FENSHAM

The ability to communicate—readily, at great distances, in robes of light—is so crucial and coveted that in the Bible it is embodied only in angels. When anyone can transmit any amount of information … at any time, instantaneously … the resulting transformation becomes a transfiguration. —GEORGE GILDER

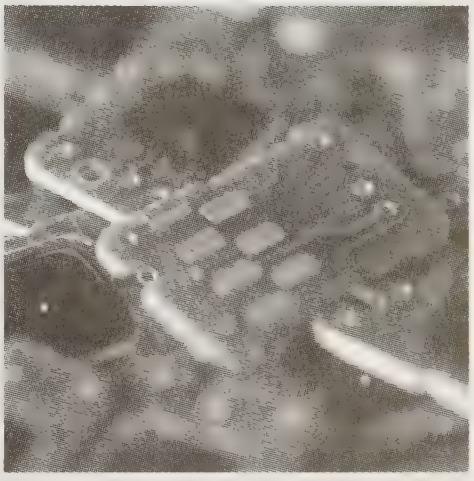
On Feb. 16, 1524, the young Gerald Roussel wrote enthusiastically about his first experience of church innovation in Strasbourg. "They sing a psalm of David or some prayer taken from the New Testament. This is sung by everyone, men and women together in fine harmony, a wonderful thing to see. You must understand that everyone has a music book in his hand. That is how they can keep together. I never imagined that it could be as pleasant and delightful as it is." He reminds me of the enthusiasm of my 12-year-old son after attending his first multi-media church service! Hymnbooks were a dramatic new technological innovation back then. Technology was changing and people, their expectations and even their way of living and perceiving changed. People started to analyze, create indexes, make printed arguments, measure things and create new machines.

Today this seems natural to us, but back then it was controversial. Almost everything we understand as traditional Presbyterian worship has been shaped by a world of print and industrial technology. In 1802, when the Industrial Revolution had taken hold with large cotton mills exploiting child labour, William Blake despaired about the "dark satanic mills" he encountered. In the midst of this it is encouraging to note that it was Christians who advocated for change and the humane treatment of workers and the abolishment of slavery.

The church is being reformatted again. Evangelists started using television in the '60s and '70s. Today some churches in Toronto don't have preaching ministers present but relay messages through a screen. Then, of course, there is the praise band with sophisticated electronic musical instruments or prerecorded music videos making its way into our worship through high-powered sound and projection systems. One observer put it this way, "You see people streaming in to these converted movie houses, looking like last night's refugees, a coffee in one hand, a crisp Bible in the other! What does that mean?" Meanwhile it is fair to say that our average Presbyterian congregation in Canada still does things very much the way they were done in the early 20th century with a bit of Strasbourg, 1524, thrown in for good measure.

Many of us feel dazed and confused due to reams of information streaming at us. Others find it stimulating, new and exciting to be transfigured by the new reality. The same event in worship may touch one of us and leave another cold. No wonder we run into conflicts when our most intimate experiences of worship touch on such dramatically differing forms of consciousness.

Often we debate the pros and cons of the old traditions, but seldom do we look at ourselves and how we have been changed by technology in our world. What are our dark satanic mills? What are our blind spots? How do we use new technologies, and how do they change and even use and reshape us? There seems to be a great inevitability about it all. One elder argued the other day that she hates going to church in a multi-media environment, yet as a Christian she feels that if this is what it takes to help the church survive and share the Gospel it has to be done…



How do we use new technologies, and how do they change and even use and reshape us?

Is this what it takes? What is it exactly that it takes to be a faithful Christian today? Certainly the virtues of faith, hope and love have not changed. Neither have the fruits of the Spirit so beautifully explored in the New Testament. Yet new challenges are presented to our faith, to our ability to love and maintain relationships, to community, to our communication, to our very sense of who we are, what time is, what authority is, what right and wrong are, who God is. These are the challenges we need to explore next month.

Charles Fensham is assistant professor of Systematic Theology at Knox College, Toronto. This is the first of three articles for the *Record* on new technologies and the church.

Time for soul-searching in Essex-Kent

Plummeting numbers call for change

BY AMY MACLACHLAN



Rev. John Giurin of St. James, Chatham, loses his beard in the Great Tsunami Shave-Off. The event raised $4,600 for tsunami relief.

The Presbytery of Essex-Kent is at a crossroads. In the midst of the heartbreak that comes with closing congregations, it must forge ahead, nurturing remaining parishioners and pushing through the comfort levels of healthy congregations that can cause stagnation. Rev. Scott McAndless, presbytery clerk and minister at Knox, Leamington, understands this challenge. At 80 per cent of its capacity, the presbytery must expand to make room for newcomers. "We are as full as we can be given the present structure," said McAndless. "We like how we are though, so any discussion about changing to allow for real growth will be difficult."

While Lakeshore St. Andrew's, its largest congregation with a whopping 1,000 people at worship each Sunday, is currently going strong, one congregation closed in March, another amalgamated with a nearby congregation, and three others are teetering towards closure. Two years ago, membership dropped by 199 people, and the number of adherents plummeted by 1,215. "Many of our congregations are quite marginal and there is worry about the future in the air," said McAndless. "However, there is much potential for the future, though some of it is rather fragile."

This fragility hasn't paralyzed the presbytery. Many congregations are leaders in alternative, contemporary worship and dynamic, new ministries. Lakeshore St. Andrew's in Tecumseh, formally established in 1863, chose the road less travelled and has grown by leaps and bounds.

Rev. Chuck Congram has served as full-time minister at Lakeshore since 1973. When he arrived, the congregation was a small, rural church in transition (thanks to 10 years of instability, disruptive leadership and a rapidly growing community around them). "This congregation deserved long-term leadership; they needed that to grow," remembers Congram.

To create stability, Congram committed himself for the long haul, maximized available resources and helped the church articulate its vision. "The congregation made a decision to give priority to people who were not here, rather than the ones who were," he said. "We went from institutional survival to a mission focus, and that gave us the impetus to make a courageous decision."

This courage surfaced in 1988, when Lakeshore purchased 10 acres of land for a $4.5-million project. "It was a costly decision," admits Congram, who is retiring at year's end, "and a huge leap, but we saw dividends almost immediately."

Today, Lakeshore has 16 people on staff. Sunday school attracts between 150 and 255 children. Nearly 600 people are involved in small groups. Members commit themselves to God, community, contribution and communicating the Good News, which are the cornerstones for the congregation's existence and a key to its revival.

When a congregation doesn't have 16 staff at its fingertips, maximizing resources, as Congram noted, becomes especially important. And as the following two ministries have found, the end of one church can be the beginning of another. The youth ministry at Duart Church in Muirkirk, Ont., began when Blenheim Church near Chatham was closed. The congregation had a healthy store of money, but few people filling the pews.

The money is now funding the Kent Regional Alternate Ministry. Developed by Rev. Tom Godfrey, Duart's part-time minister, KRAM was launched in 2004. Its mission is to give the area's unchurched youth more attention. Teenagers fill leadership roles, helping to plan and shape the many youth worship events held throughout the year. "Their interest and participation helped draw their friends, siblings, parents, grandparents and even teachers," he said. As a result, many of the family members get involved in the ministry.

The congregation's biggest struggles are avoiding leader burn-out and establishing financial security among a congregation of very young and/or new church-goers. "The growth has been so fast that the system is struggling to keep up with the success," said Godfrey. KRAM currently receives financial sup-

PHOTO: (THIS PAGE) LES MCCRACKEN



Rocky Raccoon of First, Chatham, makes appearances during children's time and at Family Sunday services. Rocky often causes mischief, but helps the children learn about growing in faith.

port from the presbytery and Canada Ministries. "If we can develop a sustainable financial support system, I have great hope for the future."

Finding such support is also a priority at University Community Church, located near the University of Windsor. Yet another phoenix that rose from the ashes, the ministry was established when Knox, Windsor, amalgamated with St. Andrew's, Windsor, in 2001. The building was maintained and the remaining funds were used to develop what is affectionately known as UCC.

Every Sunday evening, students meet at the old Knox church for worship and a pizza dinner. The mission is to "bridge the gap between people and God," which Rev. Mary Templer explained as "actively welcoming both Christians and people of other faiths, or people of no formal religion." Music, prayers and topics discussed are geared to students, and questions are encouraged during the sermon. UCC also offers a lunch group for international students. "The purpose of this is to learn more about Christianity, to practice speaking English, and to learn more about Canadian culture," said Templer.

UCC's endowment from Knox, Windsor, will keep the ministry going for about six years, but because it has no residential base, there is little stability for the ministry to grow upon. Yearly offerings are rising, but they cover less than half of UCC's costs.

"We have a unique opportunity to reach students, and we have a congregation in which 80 per cent of the people are between the ages of 18 and 30, which is quite unusual in Presbyterian churches," said Templer, who remains optimistic. "Every Sunday we have unchurched people attending." She said the leadership team is brainstorming to find new ways of generating income.

While KRAM and UCC target teens and university students, First, Chatham, is reaching families. Rev. Mike Maroney was inducted at First in 2004. His laidback, family-oriented ministry is helping to "create a church that speaks to people in the 21st century."

First involves children and youth in the service, in music ministry and welcomes them at the communion table. Family Sundays are held once a month, and a youth-led worship concert last April raised more than $1,000 for tsunami relief.

"Our aim is to be relevant about Jesus," notes the church's website. "The message of salvation never changes, but the way we communicate it has to resonate with the society we live in."

To do this, Maroney assumes newcomers have no background in Christianity. The service is informal, the language is simple, the sermons relate to everyday life, robes are shed in favour of common clothes and worship is a blend of the traditional and contemporary. "Many people have no clue about our church culture," said Maroney. "And sometimes more importance is placed on the culture than the message. You have to use a language that is understandable because the message is so important.

"It was a sacrifice for the elders," Maroney said of the changes that have transpired in the last few years. "They had to let go of the comforts they had for so long because they don't speak to people today. God has done amazing things here. And it's possible anywhere. It really is."

Even in congregations where the road taken is slightly more worn, relationships are being nurtured and new directions are being explored. Knox, Leamington, along with Anglican and Mennonite churches, is sponsoring a refugee family from Colombia. The family should be arriving in the next few months, and Rev. Scott McAndless said the congregation "is really excited."

The congregation is also in the process of revamping its leadership. The church will eventually be using term eldership—a system recognizing that elders are ordained for life, but which limits the amount of time they can actively serve on session.

Both Leamington and Paulin Memorial, Windsor, are nurturing existing members through food. Leamington's Tables for Eight involves groups of eight people taking turns meeting at each other's homes for food and fellowship. At Paulin Memorial, the weekly congregational night attracts two to 92 people. While cooks put the finishing touches on the food, songs are sung, and when the meal is done, adults head off to various study groups while the children play. "Everybody appreciates the fellowship and developing friendships," said Rev. Wendy Paterson. "People who live alone are especially glad to have company for at least one meal a week."

New ministers at two St. James churches are providing hope for the future. St. James, Thamesville, recently called a minister from Hungary. Thamesville has been part of multiple-point charges during many years of its existence, but today, it stands on its own. St. James, Chatham, experienced one of its greatest joys with the recent induction of a new minister. Chatham has a strong music program and pastoral visitation team, is putting together a worship band and has started a teen youth group to expand its ministry.

Even in the midst of the grief that comes with closing congregations, the Presbytery of Essex-Kent is looking for opportunity. "We're trying to decide what to do with the assets [from congregations that close]," said McAndless. "There is potential for growth. It's exciting, and that excitement is connected to the sorrow."

To report a vacancy for the next issue of the Record please contact: Deborah Leader
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Continued on page 48

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WHAT IS GOOD FRIDAY?

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Why did they put Jesus on a cross?
In the time that Jesus lived the cross was one of the cruelest forms of death ever devised by human beings. The book of Isaiah (53: 5-12) prophesied the cruel death of Jesus.

Why is it called Good Friday?
The suffering Jesus went through on this day brought about the greatest good there could ever be for humanity—freedom from sin. Today the cross is perhaps the world's most famous symbol. It is a symbol of hope and comfort.

Why is Jesus called the Lamb of God?
In the Old Testament, the Jewish people would kill a lamb and offer it to God as part of their worship. The lamb was sacrificed to God so that God would forgive their sins. In the Bible, John the Baptist saw Jesus coming and told the people, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

Resurrection Cookies

(To be made the evening before Easter)

You will need:

- 1 cup whole pecans
- 1 tsp. vinegar
- 1 cup sugar
- Ziploc baggie
- 3 egg whites
- pinch salt
- wooden spoon
- tape
- Bible



1. Preheat oven to 300 degrees.
2. Place pecans in zipper baggie and let children beat them with the wooden spoon to break into small pieces. Explain that after Jesus was arrested, He was beaten by the Roman soldiers. Read John 19:1-3.
3. Let each child smell the vinegar. Put 1 tsp. vinegar into mixing bowl. Explain that when Jesus was thirsty on the cross, He was given vinegar to drink. Read John 19:28-30.
4. Add egg whites to vinegar. Eggs represent life. Explain that Jesus gave His life to give us life. Read John 10:10-11.
5. Sprinkle a little salt into each child's hand. Let them taste it and brush the rest into the bowl. Explain that this represents the salty tears shed by Jesus' followers, and the bitterness of our own sin. Read Luke 23:27.
6. So far, the ingredients are not very appetizing. Add 1 cup sugar. Explain that the sweetest part of the story is that Jesus died because He loves us. He wants us to know and belong to Him. Read Ps.34:8 and John 3:16.
7. Beat with a mixer on high speed for 12 to 15 minutes until stiff peaks are formed. Explain that the colour white represents the purity in God's eyes of those whose sins have been cleansed by Jesus. Read Isa. 1:18 and John 3:1-3.
8. Fold in broken nuts. Drop by teaspoons onto wax-paper-covered cookie sheet. Explain that each mound represents the rocky tomb where Jesus' body was laid. Read Matt. 27:57-60.
9. Put the cookie sheet in the oven, close the door and **turn the oven OFF**.
10. Give each child a piece of tape and seal the oven door. Explain that Jesus' tomb was sealed. Read Matt. 27:65-66.
11. GO TO BED! Explain that they may feel sad to leave the cookies in the oven overnight. Jesus' followers were in despair when the tomb was sealed. Read John 16:20 and 22.

On Easter morning, open the oven and give everyone a cookie. What do they look like? What's inside them? Read Matt. 28:1-9.

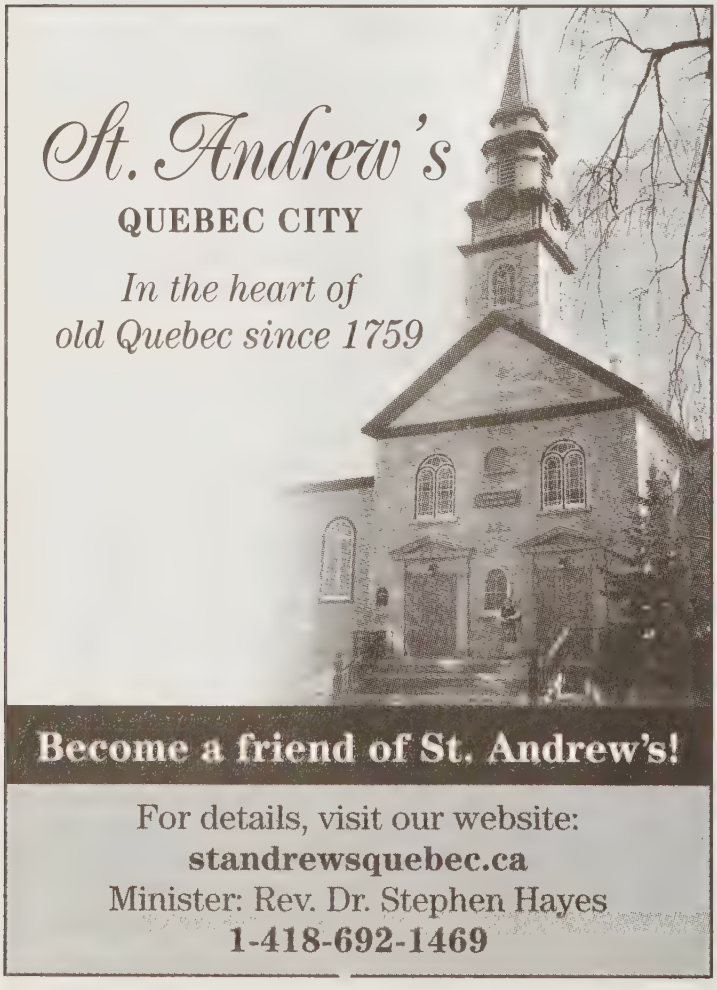
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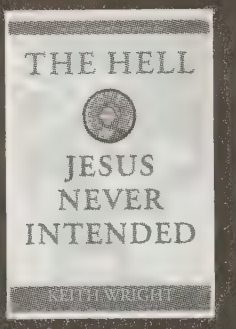
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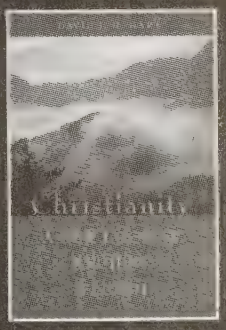
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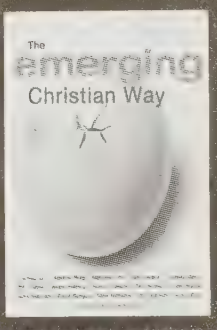
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Jean Morris



We are the stone-rollers

It is incumbent on Christians to relieve the shadows of worry and care

I remember one year in Sunday school we made a papier-maché tomb with a stone that covered the entrance. It stood in the corner of the room for a few weeks in Lent as a reminder of what was to come. On Easter Sunday we were stopped in our tracks as we observed the stone pushed away from the entrance and the empty tomb exposed for our viewing. I don't remember the lesson that day—but I'm pretty sure what it was. What I do remember is the stone rolled away. Like the angels at Jesus' tomb, our teacher had come early in the morning to roll away the stone.

Most of the stones that hold in the darkness and hurt of our lives are not of the papier-maché kind. It is not an easy push, or a light load, that stands between what happens in our lives and the experience of Easter message. The stones that block new life and liberation are heavy and daunting—not easily rolled away—and keep us from experiencing the power of resurrection moments.

Many Canadian seniors need help in rolling away the stones that entomb them. As the Canadian population ages, more seniors face complex issues of housing, long-term care, isolation from their communities and growing health concerns. The National Council on Aging predicts that in 25 years, nearly 25 per cent of Canadians will be over age 65. While there is much to celebrate in an aging population, there are also issues of life and faith that weigh heavily on the lives of individuals and families.

Many seniors face economic challenges as they live longer and therefore rely on their savings for a longer period of time. This economic vulnerability is especially acute for women, and in particular separated, divorced and immigrant women, whose incomes during working years are lower. Seniors who need long-term care will be faced with issues of finding the right care to meet their individual needs, loss of independence, health issues, and sometimes they have to leave their own communities, which brings other losses.

Some researchers say that caring for a family member is like having a job and a half. Add to that your own job, family and other responsibilities and the burden is great

How will the stone be moved for them? Where are the signs of resurrection and new life?

Family members are often called upon to provide care. The demands of being available, providing practical support and contributing to another person's emotional and spiritual health constitute an overwhelming act of love, one that can take its toll. Some researchers say that caring for a family member is like having a job and a half. Add to that your own job, family and other responsibilities and the burden is great.

Who will roll away the stone for them? Where are the signs of hope and promise?

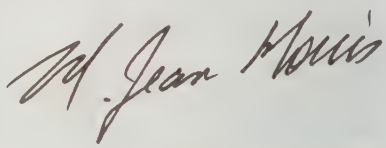
I believe that the Christian community is called to roll away the stone. As Christians, who see the empty tomb as a sign of Christ's victory over all the death and darkness of this world, we are stone rollers for those who live with the weight and shadow of worry and care.

We of the Church can be stone rollers in advocating for excellent care for seniors. Governments and agencies need, and sometimes even seek, the wisdom of faith communities in setting public policy. On behalf of those who do not have a voice, our churches can speak in support of those who are often marginalized in our society.

Having a sense of belonging is a spiritual need for all of us, and one which the seniors with whom I work have named for themselves. As congregations, through our visitation teams, elders' districts and pastoral care committees, we can respond to that need by being present with people and assuring them in word and deed that they belong—to Christ and to the community of faith. These acts can roll away huge burdens.

The women went to the tomb and found the stone rolled away. It was the beginning of an adventure that changed their lives and the life of the world. Easter is the promise that Christ lives to bring hope and healing to the world for which he died. Rolling away stones is a sign of that promise.

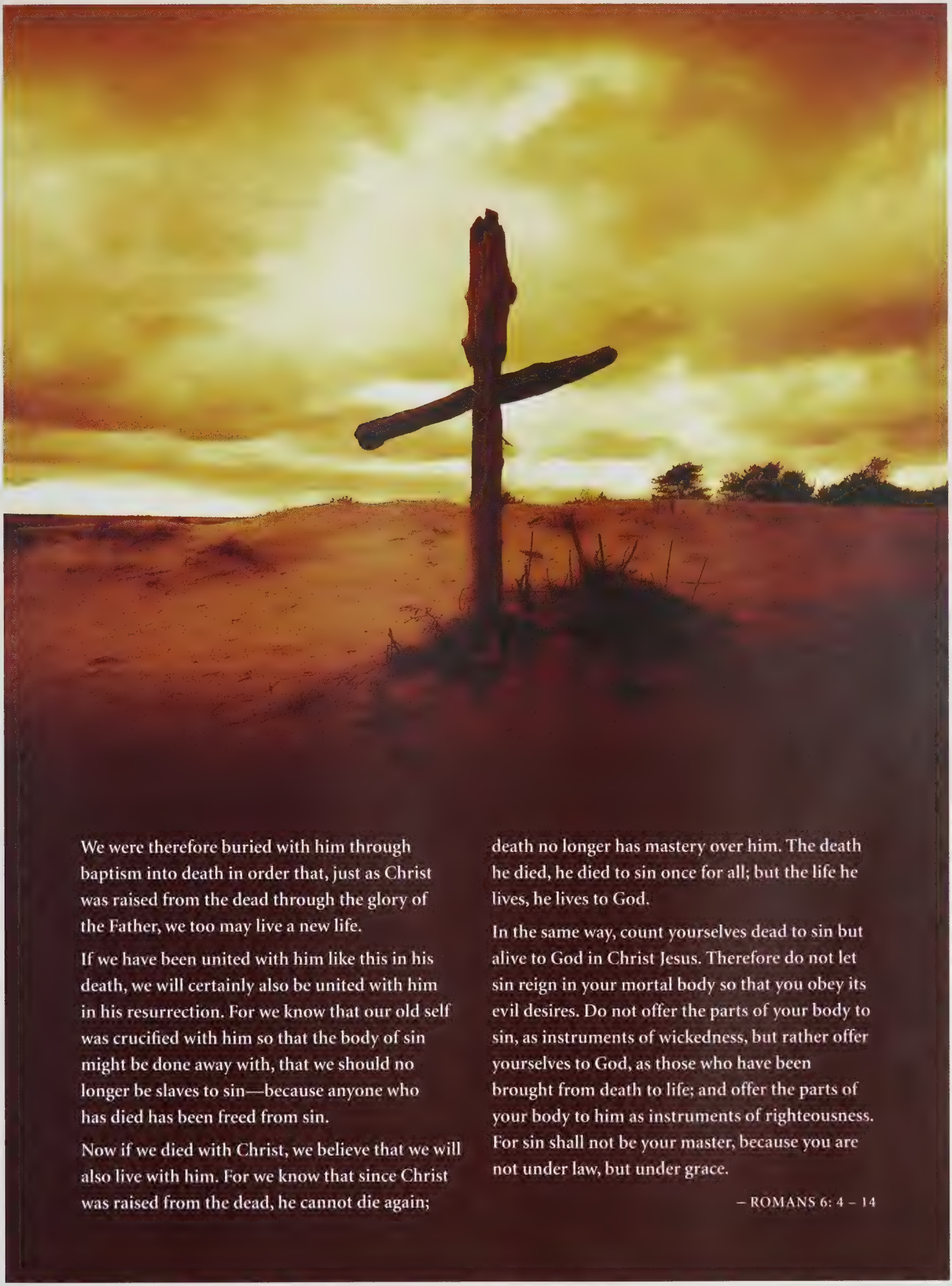
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We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.

Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.

– ROMANS 6: 4 – 14

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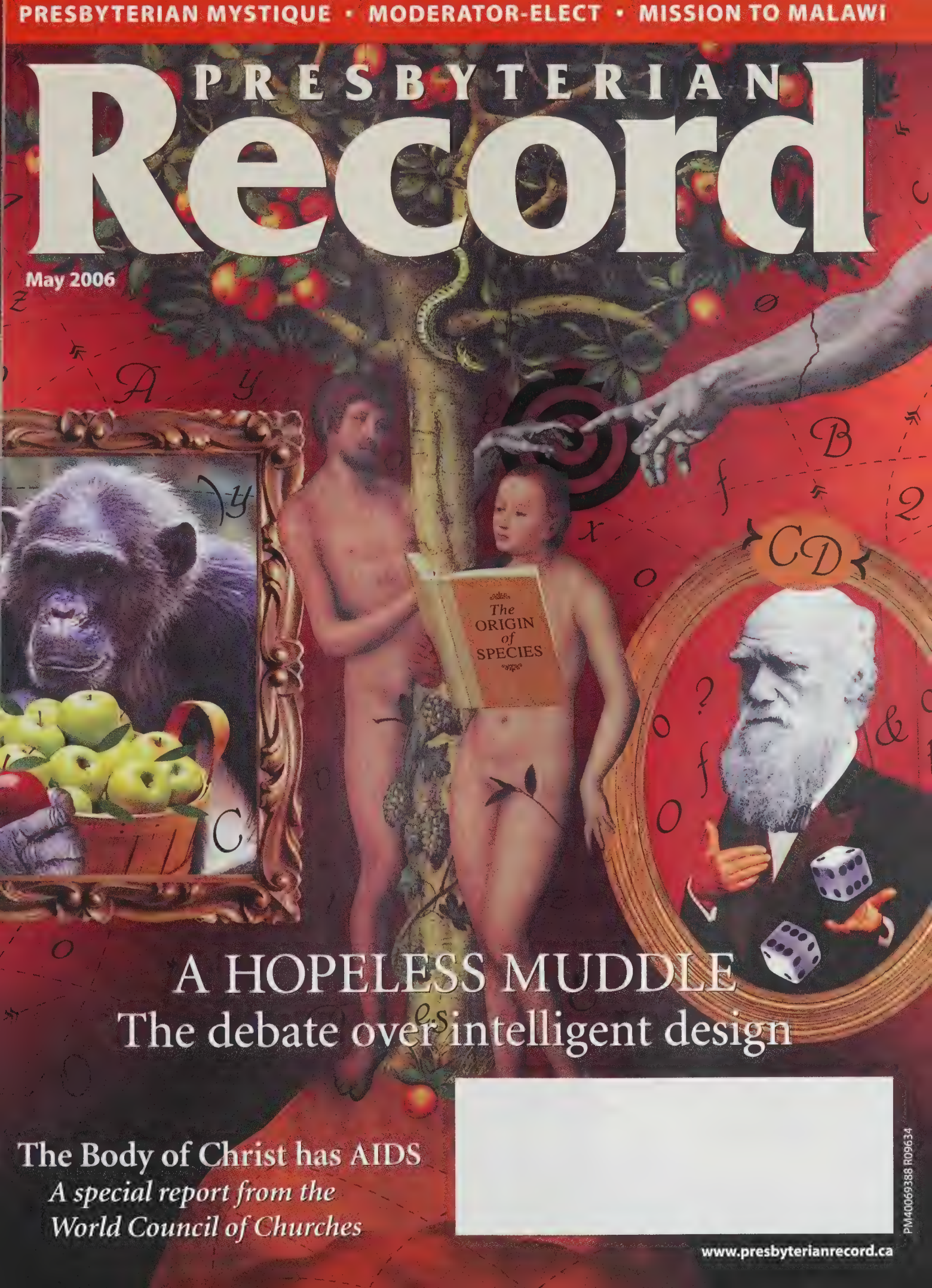
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May 2006



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The debate over intelligent design

The Body of Christ has AIDS
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May 2006



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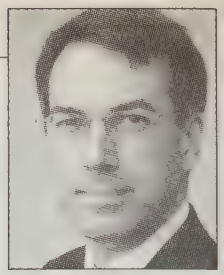
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David Harris



Evolving polemics obscure real concerns

If there is one thing that characterizes a good deal of the intelligent design debate, it is how sadly unintelligent it is. Far from evolving, the polemic from both scientists and religion leaders could give rise to a new meaning for regression analysis. • All of which serves only to distract people from the central message and mission of Christianity to proclaim God's love in a broken world that is confusing enough without this distracting muddle.

On the one side are some U.S. school boards whose narrow reading of the Bible turns God into a fumbling magician who pulled the present world out of a hat a few scant millennia ago.

Such a reading is more likely to propel intelligent people to David Hume's side. The 18th-century Scottish philosopher wondered if this world was the work "of an infant deity who afterwards abandoned it, ashamed of his lame performance?"

Today, British scientist Richard Dawkins is equally dismissive of Christianity but then he creates his own belief system in the unseen "meme"—literally a figment of his imagination he hopes to plant in everyone else's mind.

For more than half the world's population there is no question the universe is designed by an Intelligence. Jews, Christians and Muslims all believe this, and Hindus and Sikhs also believe in divine, ordered creation.

Few teachers of these religions find the notion of the Earth being billions of years old conflicts with their faith. In fact, it is a relatively modern notion in Christianity that the Bible be read as a simplistic history book to conclude, as James Ussher did about 350 years ago, that the world began in 4004 BC. (He also thought it would end 6,000 years later—in 1996.)

Take Augustine, who has influenced Western thinking since the early fifth century. He wrote volumes on Genesis, pondering, among other things, the subtle question of what is meant by "days" in the text.

Nine hundred years later, thanks in part to the recovery by Muslim scholars of the extant works of Aristotle, one monk, Roger Bacon, laid a significant part of the foundation for the modern scientific method. His contemporary, another monk, Thomas Aquinas, proposed a number of arguments he regarded as evidence of God's existence. The fifth is the one that all things move towards a goal and so there must be an intelligent designer who directs these things, and that is God.

Faith does not preclude scientific discovery and science does not preclude having faith. And today's scientists who are persuaded that the odds of this world existing points to an intelligent designer are not bad scientists, although what they say goes beyond what science can test and so is perhaps not unscientific but non-scientific.

Likewise, the theory of evolution is just a theory like any other in science, except that some are more likely than others. Did Darwin and some of his followers have an anti-religious bent? Yes, probably. But so what? One doesn't have to believe all the pseudo-philosophical underpinnings of Darwin to accept that the modern theory of evolution (which does differ from Darwin in places) is a reasonable, if unfinished explanation of the development of life.

In fact, both the scientists and religionists in this debate employ dubious philosophical reasoning. But rather than taking up this polemic, Christians ought to address the more profound question that troubles the modern mind: How do we account for evil in a world created by the God of love we proclaim? Glib or dogmatic answers will drive away at least as many as they satisfy.

Equally, scientists ought not to fear faith among their members. Science can't prove or disprove God's existence. But this debate allows scientists to avoid difficult ethical questions about cloning, genetic manipulation, weapons development and ever more sophisticated methods of tracking people's movements around the world.

Humans are bound to develop technologies and they are equally bound to hold religious beliefs. If Christianity is to be relevant, it cannot become a refuge for unintelligent discourse. It must embrace and engage the world of thought and science to make sure that all God's children are cared for and have the chance to live peaceful, healthy lives.

After all, it is our belief that we are stewards of all creation.

David Harris

letters

No simple answers

I found the March articles by Andrew Faiz and Michael Coren provocative.

Let me share my perspective on the violence and social problems among black Jamaicans in Toronto. This is a complex and deep-rooted issue; there is no quick simple solution. We Jamaicans, who know our country closely, feel it deeply. While there in February, I heard the prayer of an elderly Christian, pleading with God for an end to violence and asking why it is taking so long.

Even as a child in Jamaica more than 60 years ago, I could sense the threat of trouble to come, given the social disparities in wealth, education, family and cultural patterns and standards of morality. Michael Coren writes of the breakdown of morality in North America, beginning with the hippie culture of the 1960s. That is a mere 40 years ago. In Jamaica, the forces that distorted our social history began 500 years ago and we are still struggling to define ourselves as a people with common standards of behaviour and a common identity.

What do you know of the history of the Caribbean? Consider the efforts to make amends to the aboriginals of Canada, consider the peace and reconciliation process in South Africa, and then consider that no such redress has been offered to Caribbean blacks, whose forebears were transported from their homes and social systems in West Africa, to become slaves in the Caribbean. They were stripped of their language and culture by deliberate separation of tribespeople, denied the dignity of family life and even after emancipation they were given the poorest land to eke out an existence. In the collective heart of black Jamaica there is a residue of deep anger and shame. And there is God's grace. I thank God for the missionaries who came to minister to the freed slaves and who built churches, schools and hospitals. The church flourishes in many forms in Jamaica today.

Here in Canada, as host country to immigrants, you have inherited many of our finest people, and some of the worst. I am thankful for every gesture of goodwill, such as Andrew Faiz's call to share the environment. I welcome every effort made for immigrants, including the social programs despised by Michael Coren; since what doesn't work for one person may help another, and while you may not cure the problem, you might at least contain the damage.

In working towards a remedy, I urge you to seek out the strong, active Jamaicans in the community; work with them, pray with them, listen to them and empower them as together you devise strategies to fit specific situations and the people in them. And expect to wait for results. I respect Michael Coren's call to individuals to will and choose the good, but that ability also has to be nurtured and developed, and that takes time. Bear with us.

Joyce Gladwell
Elmira, Ont.

Michael Coren concludes that "[gun violence is] partly but not completely about race and it's partly but not completely about poverty. It's about those who are willing to join society and those who are not." I doubt that anyone, even the liberals that he is always ranting against, would disagree with him. There are no simple answers, but the fact remains that dealing with the part of gun crime that is about race and poverty is important. Coren often talks about balance but then he is content to give bipolar ultimatums by dividing people between "those who are willing to join society and those who are not." We must ask the question, what kind of society are we inviting people to join? Maybe the ultimatum should be centered around creating a society that we can all participate in equally.

Toronto's response to gun violence needs to be multi-faceted and multi-valent in ways in which both rights and responsibilities are balanced. But it is not helpful to imagine that change and transformation are a requisite only for trou-

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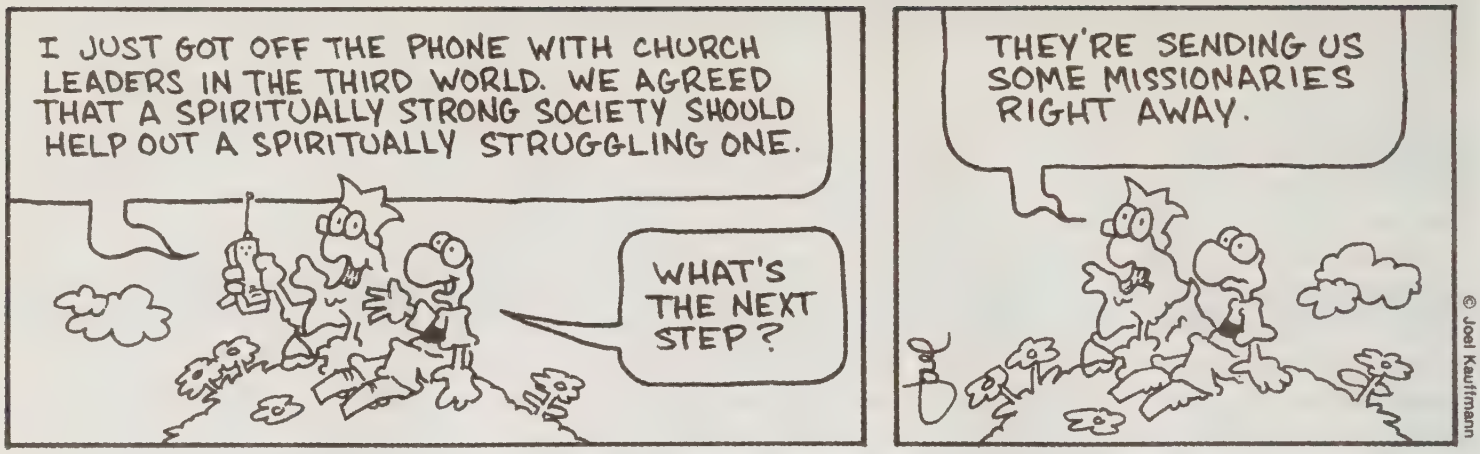
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bled communities. Citing references to the good old days when people picked themselves up by the boot straps and confronted racism by leading exemplary lives is not helpful. For both good and ill, we live in a different world, in which the highest of our aspirations should be not only to overcome racism and poverty but also to eradicate it. I think that is the answer that Christians need to live into. Playing the blame game will get us nowhere.

Dorothy McDougall
Toronto

By asking the questions and giving the answer "others are frightened of even considering," Mr. Coren implies that his article is an act of courage. Mr. Coren condemns members of a community with his charge that they are lazy, greedy, incapable and nothing more than breeders. Courageous, Mr. Coren? Perhaps ignorant. What I find most offensive about Coren's piece is that he presents it as a call. He presumes to tell me that I, as a Christian, must do the same as he. Mr. Coren, it is Christ whom I will follow. Christ calls us to the communities in Toronto to face the pain, hostility and violence, without talking tough, name-calling or finger-pointing. It is in the loving of, not the denigrating of others, where Christ is revealed and communities are transformed.

I am embarrassed that the *Record* would choose to publish such vitriol. Of course there is room for different opinions. This can encourage dialogue. Coren's article leaves no room for either differing opinions or dialogue. It was a vicious rant.

I am cancelling my subscription to the *Record*. Please let me know when you decide to publish again with integrity.

Catherine Chappell
Pointe Claire, Quebec

This is a great article. Why can't intelligent people see and tell it like it is? I had not thought of the fact that such violent behaviour is much less common among other visible minorities who for the most part have and practise a strong sense of family!

Wallace Whyte
Toronto

That non-inclusive spiritual

I wasn't going to look inside the March issue once I had seen the exclusive sentence on the front cover. Why would a Christian magazine in the 21st century choose to print boldly the pronoun "His" instead of the word "God's"?

When I shared my dismay with a Presbyterian friend, I heard anger about Michael Coren's column. I said I had stopped reading his column months ago.

As I was pondering the magazine at the kitchen table the next day, four 19-year-olds sat down to eat. I pushed the cartoon in front of them. In a glance they took its message in and said, "That's so anti-Muslim." I pulled the magazine back to look at it and was ashamed of my denomination.

I've now turned the pages of this issue and I see there are some good news items and stories about Presbyterians and other Christians who are trying to serve God's creation in non-judgmental, inclusive, just and loving ways. It's sad that

extreme inclusion

God cannot be divided up. We are all bearers of God's own divine life within.

– Tom Harpur

Visit **extremeshift.com** for more from *The Emerging Christian Way*

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high profile parts of this issue do not inspire such service.

Ironically, the writer of the first letter in the same issue wants more PCC congregations to join the Every Home Plan; he wants more Presbyterians in our churches to subscribe; more of us to provide adequate support to our national church magazine. However, he does not offer any reason for this except implying that it is an obligation of our membership, a tradition for members to financially support the denomination's magazine, a way to have a sustainable magazine. He says nothing about the magazine's responsibility to members and congregations of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

In the 21st century, there are many other sources of well written, inspiring articles about Christians working with God to bring about God's reign, articles that do not put down or insult me or other people.

Anne Saunders
Toronto

Thank you for the collage of essays and articles highlighting environmental awareness issues in the March issue. It was an insightful and thoughtful piece.

However, I was very dismayed at the title. To be honest I expected better from the *Record*. Our church continues to struggle with non-inclusive patriarchal language and the very glib use of this language adds to that struggle. Interestingly, all of the essays and articles used inclusive language, further making the title an embarrassment.

The male-dominated language some church leaders continually use for God is, I believe, an ill-conceived attempt to make God look powerful. It is not merely a language issue, it is an issue of power. During Lent we seek to understand the power of God's self sacrificing, self emptying love which exposes us to our very core. But God's alternative use of power is so foreign to our North American culture that even we, who profess to be Christians, don't quite get it—it seems so powerless. It is almost like we want to apologize for God's powerlessness by using strong male-dominated language.

You may have been trying for a catchy title. It didn't work.

Marty Molengraaf
Aberfoyle, Ont.

Corrections

Congratulations on the excellent March issue and the further links provided online.

However, I was unable to hear the Mocha Mission songs online.

William Feunekes
via email

Editor responds: Mea culpa, William. Our first attempt at adding multimedia to our website bumped into technical difficulties. The songs are online now. Please enjoy.

There were typing errors in the Mocha Mission winning song by Henrietta Beattie. These errors have been corrected online.

The *Presbyterian Record* welcomes letters to the editor. Please include your name, home address and a daytime telephone number. We reserve the right to edit all letters for length and clarity.

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Praise God, indeed. Dr. Gerard Booy (third from left) was inducted as minister of Haney, Maple Ridge, B.C., in March. Dr. Crowell (Interim Moderator), Rev. Bruce McAndless-Davis (Moderator, Presbytery of Westminster) and Rev. Bob Garvin (Acting Clerk) welcomed him aboard.



Knox, Teeswater, Ont., put some new pews in the sanctuary in February. That meant the old pews had to be removed (they were sold). Which is how Symon van der Vlies comes to be sitting on a pew on his dad's wagon while it is being delivered to its new owner.



For some stunning nature photography by Len Taylor, of St. Catharines, Ont., please visit our website: www.presbyterianrecord.ca

West Adelaide, Kerwood, Ont., has run two congregational mission projects on behalf on Mara Evangelical in Myanmar, helping with village water systems, nursing training programs, mosquito netting and small loan projects. The relationship began when Anna McCoskery (left) met Mara's Rev. Vahnei at a WARC conference. In March, Rev. Larry Amiro (right) dedicated a friendship banner to be sent to Myanmar.



As reported in the Sept. 2005 issue of the Record, Bridlewood, Toronto, has been fundraising for tsunami relief since February of last year. The Sri Lanka Tsunami Fishing Boat Project is now complete, the occasion marked by a $5,000 donation presented by clerk of session Jack Charleson to Rev. Ken Little, the Sri Lanka and South India Regional Director of Samaritan's Purse last December. The funds will be used to purchase at least one boat, a motor and nets to enable an individual or family to resume their livelihood.



"We have no wealth or learning/ What shall we children bring?" How about some Caesar salad, some pasta and a selection of Italian pastries? That's what the Sunday school at Knox, Georgetown, Ont., brought to the Mama Mia luncheon, and ended up raising $500 for their sponsored children around the world.



Cake of the month: Guess what's happening here? And, no, she's it's not about the famous hockey player. Evelyn Davies' friends in the WMS of St. Andrew's, Barrie, Ont., sent this along to celebrate the woman who continues to make them smile and laugh and lives every day to the fullest. They'll need a bigger cake next year when she moves into the three-digit era.

Knox-St. Andrew's Evening Friendship Group, in Dutton, Ont., decided to push two aspects of their regular gatherings: friendship and group. All for a great cause, of course. One evening they handed out cards marked King, Queen and Outcast, to help demonstrate what those who are struggling with illness, poverty or racism might feel on a daily basis. Other activities considered what it might be like to deal with starvation or drought. A collection at the end of the evening was sent to support PWS&D mission work in Kenya.



HAD CAKE LATELY? Share your celebrations with the rest of the church. Send your stories to PnP@presbyterianrecord.ca along with your digital photographs, 300 dpi minimum, high quality JPEGs. Or mail the photographs to: The Record, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, M3C 1J7.

To be considered for People and Places, photographs should be sharp and everyone clearly identified. The *Record* reserves the right to reject any photos not of sufficient quality. Photographs cannot be returned.

Funding increase for PWS&D

PRESBYTERIAN WORLD SERVICE & DEVELOPMENT has a new long-term agreement with the Canadian International Development Agency that will increase its funding for development programs by 15 per cent.

According to Guy Smagghe, PWS&D's government relations officer, CIDA accepted PWS&D's proposal because the new program is focused on fewer partners in fewer countries and has fewer goals and objectives than the previous ones. This concentration allows for a closer relationship with partners, with more time, money and energy directed where they can have a greater impact.

The new CIDA program will focus on programs in Tanzania, Malawi, India, El Salvador and Nicaragua. The program includes work on sustainable agriculture, clean water, empowerment of women, HIV/AIDS, protection of vulnerable children, income generation and community health.

The new five-year agreement (up from the traditional three-year arrangement) increases CIDA's contribution from $398,000 to $458,000 per year.

PWS&D recently underwent a rigorous audit of its spending practices, program funding and overall operations for its 2003-2006 CIDA program. Performed by CIDA, the results of the evaluation were positive. Ursula Mount evaluated the effectiveness of the program.

"The organizational efficiency and effectiveness of PWS&D has been maintained at a high level," stated Mount in her report. "A real effort is made to deliver a logical, well structured and well balanced international development program in the developing countries, as well as an effective education program in Canada. The dedicated staff and committee members and their continuing efforts and personal commitments give PWS&D direction in their implementation and support of projects that can transform the lives of a reasonable measured number of the poor, ill and underprivileged men, women, adolescents and children."

SPOTLIGHT



Rev. Chuck Congram, right, was a highlight at the REAP Evangelism Conference in February in Hamilton. Relevant Effective Accessible Practical—this was the second of three conferences focusing on outreach ministry. Glen Soderholm, left, led worship with his original music: "May the Peace of Christ go with you, and also with you." Look for another conference next year!

Mark Lewis appointed to Kitchener church

Former moderator Rev. Mark Lewis has been appointed to one of the denomination's largest congregations, St. Andrew's, Kitchener, Ont. He will be inducted on May 7, and will fill the gap left after a three-member ministerial team had its pastoral ties severed by a presbytery-appointed committee in September 2004.

"I'm tremendously excited," Lewis told the *Record*. "I'm looking forward to their commitment to justice ministries, to PWS&D and Presbyterians Sharing and to fair trade. And through my personal meetings with them, I sense they are a warm and loving community with a genuine desire to serve Christ."

Lewis stressed that this was "a tremendously difficult decision," as he has a deep love for MacNab Street Church in Hamilton, where he has served as senior minister for nine years. "I've experienced wonderful joy and fulfillment there, and the people have been loving, gracious and supportive of me, making this a positive experience even though the transition can be stressful." Lewis will replace interim minister Vernon Tozer, who has been providing leadership to a congregation stunned by its loss since the fall of 2004.

Ties were severed following several unsuccessful attempts to reconcile differences among the team members, leaving much of the congregation in shock.

Despite the pain and disruption the congregation has endured during this transition, there are positive outcomes. "They did some strategic planning and learned where they need to do some work," said Rev. Aubrey Botha, the interim moderator, "and it increased their sense of belonging, brought them closer together and showed them how to be the Lord's congregation in Kitchener. I think it will be a good match."

Botha said once Lewis settles into his new post and determines the needs of the congregation, a new search team will be created and the search for a second minister will begin. Although Botha's term as interim moderator will end in May, he will act as a mentor to Lewis for one year. – *AM*

Walking together

Council announces healing and reconciliation initiative

After several years of planning, studying, researching and debating, Assembly Council adopted several recommendations from the Healing and Reconciliation Design Team to establish a national Healing and Reconciliation initiative called Walking Together. The new commitments are as follows:

- The PCC will collaborate with the leaders of the United Church, Anglican Church and Roman Catholic entities to embark upon a Ten Days tour across Canada to share a desire for healing and reconciliation with church members at large, the aboriginal community and civil society, and to encourage and inspire local churches to walk together with their aboriginal neighbours.
- A full-time animateur will be contracted by the Life and Mission Agency for an initial period of one year to work with local church groups and congregations, national staff, the courts of the church, ecumenical partners and aboriginal organizations to further the aims and objectives of the initiative.
- A healing and reconciliation consultative committee will be established by LMA and will be responsible for supporting Walking Together; consulting with national staff, regional personnel, interested persons and ecumenical partners; planning, promoting and finding ways to implement programs and activities; providing direction and support to a team of volunteers selected and trained to support the elements of this plan; and supporting the work of the national animateur and the work of the LMA after the animateur's term has ended.

'I thank you for the opportunity to serve. What you've approved today will make a difference—and I'm counting on it'

- In 2003, General Assembly set aside $500,000 for healing and reconciliation purpose. To date, about $100,000 has been spent, and the council decided the remaining funds should be used by allocating 75 per cent to program expenses such as the Ten Days tour, healing and reconciliation initiatives involving youth, developing resources and distributing to congregations, establishing and supporting a resource team to support the program and for seed funding for local initiatives. The remaining 25 per cent would be used to pay for an animateur and establishing the healing and reconciliation consultative committee.
- The council will recommend to the General Assembly that the PCC recognize the National Day of Healing and Reconciliation (May 26) by designating the Sunday in the church year before this day as Healing and Reconciliation Sunday.

The possibility of starting a new program was met with criticism at last year's General Assembly, when leaders of the church's existing native ministries argued that there was no need to reinvent the wheel, and any available funds should be used to support and strengthen the programs already in place. Proponents of the new program said while the existing ministries are worthy and required, they focus on healing aboriginals only (through counselling, food banks, shelters, etc). The new program will focus on the relationship between aboriginals and non-aboriginals, making it something for the entire church to get involved with and to inspire action.

"I thank you for the opportunity to serve," said Lew Ford, who sat on the design team from the beginning and was just released of his duties, along with the rest of the team. "What you've approved today will make a difference—and I'm counting on it." – *AM*

New agreement limits liability

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH in Canada is in the midst of revising its residential schools agreement with the federal government, dropping the cap for compensation from $2.1 million to $1.32 million. Although not finalized, Rev. Stephen Kendall, principal clerk, told Assembly Council he is optimistic and, at press time, was looking forward to final approval from Cabinet in April.

"This is good news all around," Kendall told the *Record*. "The settlement goes beyond the money. We have the chance to create a lasting, comprehensive settlement to the whole issue."

Kendall suggested that the funds saved from the new agreement be used for the church's participation in the newly established Truth and Reconciliation Commission, a joint endeavour of the government and churches (see January *Record*), as well as commemoration participation, production of requested documents and the Presbyterian Church's own healing and reconciliation work.

Last November, the government announced an agreement in principle that would compensate all former students of residential schools in a national, lump sum payment. Each student is to receive $10,000, plus $3,000 for every year of attendance after the first. Separate compensation for cases of serious physical and sexual abuse will still be given.

The Presbyterian Church has already paid about $366,000 for 20 claims, with representatives attending the proceedings when obliged. "We're having an impact when we go to the hearings," said Kendall. "It's a tangible expression of our feelings, and we'll continue to do this."

It is estimated that it will take about six to eight years to finish the compensation process entirely. – *AM*

Count yourself in

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH in Canada's website will feature a link to a new online questionnaire for the 2006 Census of Population, handled by Statistics Canada. The link will be available beginning May 2, while the census officially starts on May 16.

This strategy is an attempt by StatsCan to raise awareness of the census and to encourage participation in the survey. The data collected is used by governments to design and assess programs and to discuss funding issues. Many non-governmental organizations, businesses and media also use the information in their work. The census measures things such as education, housing, family size and income.

Results will be available beginning early 2007. Find the link at www.presbyterian.ca beginning May 2.– *AM*



Moderator-elect named

WILMA WELSH, an elder at Knox, Guelph, Ont., has been named moderator-elect for the 2006 General Assembly, to be held this year in St. Catharines, Ont. Her name will be presented at the opening session of assembly, where commissioners will vote.

Welsh has served the Presbyterian Church for more than 42 years. Her heart lies in international ministries, however, beginning in 1969 when the Women's Missionary Society appointed her to Taiwan. In 1992, she became the administrator in International Ministries, overseeing the missions program. Welsh is also interested in the role of laity and retirees within the church.

Welsh would become the third female moderator of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and the first lay person (although a diaconal minister, also a woman, held the office in 1996).

Religious arbitration banned

Ontario recently banned all forms of religious arbitration in family matters, including Sharia law. Bill 27 was passed Feb. 14, making it illegal for religious bodies to hold their own court to decide matters related to family law. Such practices were allowed in Ontario since 1991, and had been used most extensively in Jewish circles.

As reported here in Oct. 2005, Sharia law became an issue back in 2004, when Marion Boyd, a former attorney general, said in a government-commissioned report that such courts should be allowed (with safeguards imposed), as they did not jeopardize women's rights.

Passionate debates ensued, both among the Muslim community and others, with critics saying Sharia would infringe upon women's equality in custody battles, property disputes and other marriage matters, while proponents argue it is imperative to their faith to make legal decisions in line with their beliefs, and that rights would be protected.

Last September, Premier Dalton McGuinty said despite Boyd's report, he would outlaw religious arbitration in family matters.

The Canadian Jewish Congress has expressed disappointment with the new law, while the Muslim Canadian Congress has praised it. – *AM with files from National Post*

Bible Society celebrates centennial

THE CANADIAN BIBLE SOCIETY is celebrating 100 years of reaching "every man, woman and child with the life-giving Word of God" by distributing, translating and publishing the Bible in Canada and around the world. The Canadian Bible Society has translated Scripture into 134 languages, including 23 aboriginal languages. It also offers Bibles in large print, Braille and on tape. The society distributes New Testaments to prisons and the Canadian Forces, Scripture readings to hospitals, nursing homes and funeral homes, and offers 100 free Bibles to churches destroyed by fire.

To celebrate the anniversary, the society is holding special events throughout 2006, highlighted by the Bike for Bibles Centennial Ride. The ride will begin on July 2 and will feature more than 60 cyclists making their way from Victoria, British Columbia to St. John's, Nfld. The cyclists will cover more than 7,800 kilometres over 62 days, travelling through every province and 200 communities. Cyclists range in age from teenagers to seniors, and have raised more than $5,000 to participate. All proceeds go towards the work of the CBS.

The CBS will host the Norton Celebration Service on June 25 at the Mohawk Chapel in Brantford, Ont. The service remembers Captain John Norton, or Teyoninhokarawen, the Six Nations Indians chief who first translated the Gospel of John into Mohawk in 1804, thus beginning a movement that resulted in the creation of the Bible Society.

The society is celebrating across Canada with local events run by district offices. Visit www.biblesociety.ca/districts to find out what's happening in your area, and www.bikeforbibles.ca to learn more about the centennial ride. – *AM*

Bluegrass music to raise money for mission

PRESBYTERIANS ARE RESPONDING to the disaster left by Hurricane Katrina by volunteering their time and energy for short-term mission trips to Mississippi and Louisiana. A 26-person team from Ivy Presbyterian in New Tecumseth, Ont., will be making its way to Baton Rouge in August to rebuild homes that were destroyed by the hurricane. Ages of the mission-goers range from 12 to 70-something.

To raise money for this trip, the congregation is hosting the Katrina Bluegrass Benefit on June 9 at the Tottenham arena. As a salute to the deep musical roots in New Orleans, the concert will feature some of the best bluegrass bands in Canada.

Steve Zimmerman, Ivy's ministry team leader, was in the area last November to deliv-

er a truckload of toys to children who had lost everything. "At that time, I was interested in returning with our church to help with the rebuilding," he said. "I put the proposal of going to New Orleans to help and 26 people from our little church put up their hands to go."

The Department of World Affairs in Baton Rouge said it will send a delegate to present the Key to New Tecumseth. A sister-city relationship between the two communities will be established during the ceremony. Ivy is planning on arranging mission trips over the next few years to offer continued support.

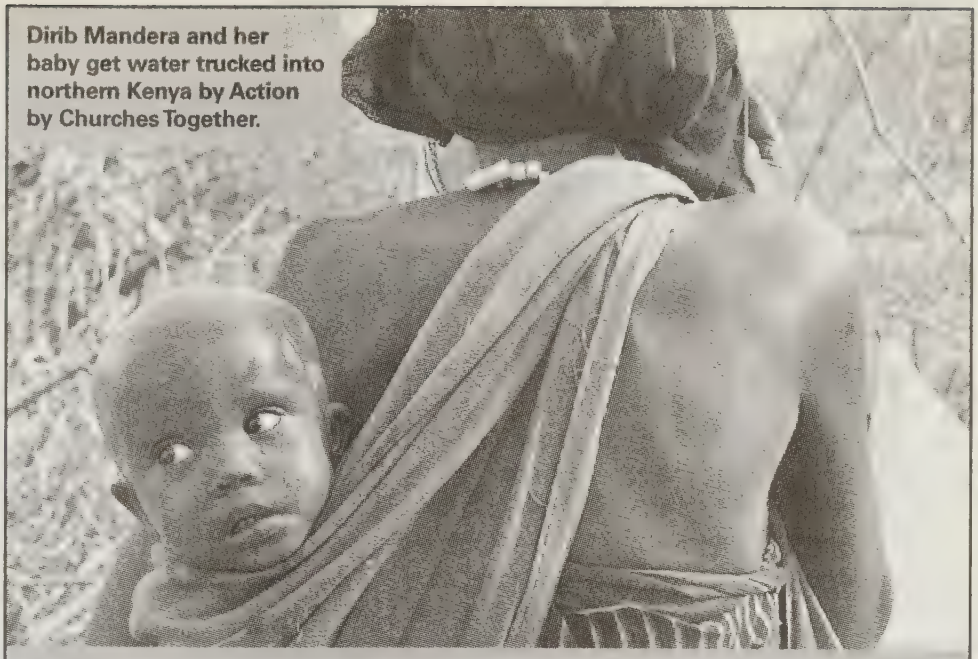
Details of the event are as follows:
When: June 9.
Where: Tottenham Arena, Tottenham, Ont.
What: Some of the best bluegrass bands in Canada.
Cost: $15. Only 2,000 tickets will be sold.
How: Buy tickets at any REMAX office in Barrie, Tottenham, Angus, Alliston and Innisfil. For more information on bands and tickets call 1-877-324-7555 – *AM*

Maritime stained glass registry established

SATTLER'S STAINED GLASS STUDIO in Nova Scotia launched the first Maritime Stained Glass Registry to document the Maritimes' stained glass treasures last summer. The purpose of the registry is to serve as a record if a window is lost or damaged, and to act as a conservation aid.

The studio came to realize the lack of documentation of church windows in the Maritimes when doing restoration projects. Churches and other owners are contacted by the studio and asked to return a simple survey. Studio staff will then visit the site and take photos of the glass. Owners then receive a comprehensive window report detailing the data, condition and replacement value (for insurance purposes) of each window. If any conservation measures are required those are also recommended. The service is free for all participants in the Maritimes.

It is hoped that by the end of 2008, all of Nova Scotia's stained glass windows will be documented. Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick will follow. Visit www.sattlerglas.com to learn more, or go to www.sattlerglas.com/msgr/msgr-survey-form.html for the online survey.



Dirib Mandera and her baby get water trucked into northern Kenya by Action by Churches Together.

CAROLINE WATERMAN, ACT

I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink

When the water tankers arrived Dirib Mandera's baby had not had any water to drink all day. Dirib first had to wet the baby's head before she could give the baby anything to drink. Otherwise the cool, clean water might have sent the baby into shock. After two years of drought, most of the boreholes and wells where Dirib lives in northeastern Kenya have run dry. Dirib and her children now depend on the water delivered by Action by Churches Together (ACT).

PWS&D is working with ACT and the Canadian Foodgrains Bank to respond to severe drought which has left people desperate for food and water in Malawi, Tanzania, Kenya, and Zimbabwe. Together we are distributing food and seed, drilling boreholes and trucking in water. But we need your help, as the resources we have to respond are particularly low.

Share hope. Support PWS&D.

PWS&D's relief and development programs operate because people and congregations financially support the work. PWS&D receives no funds from Presbyterians Sharing...

For more information or to make a donation, write or call:

Presbyterian World Service & Development (PWS&D)

50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7
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Please make your cheque payable to PWS&D

Enriching the fabric of community

Over a century later May Court Clubs continues to attract members and grow

It's always the case: if you want something done, ask somebody who is busy. Take Marilynne Grant for example. She is an elder at Knox, Oakville, Ont., and she also sits on the executive of of the Oakville May Court Club, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary. The club's 200 members raised $65,000 last year for a variety of different projects. One of the most popular is a puppet project that visits schools, teaching various life lessons, and a lunch box program that delivers food items to 11 schools in the Oakville area. They also support local groups working with disabled adults, cancer patients and people living with HIV, run a scholarship program which gave $20,000 to 21 students last year, and organize several annual fundraisers that support various community initiatives. "I've made so many close friends," Grant told the *Record*. "And you work really hard to raise money and give it back to your community."

Sheila Gillies, an elder at Knox, St. Catharines, is a 10-year member of that city's May Court Club and incoming vice president of the national association. The St. Catharines club is celebrating 70 years of service this year. Its 175 members give a total of 5,000 hours of community service each year and helped raise more than $34,000 between 2005 and 2006.

"I believe in investing in the lives of people and organizations around me to enrich the fabric of the community," said Gillies. "Fundraising together for a common goal is fun, and knowing that we can make a difference in the lives of others gives a sense of accomplishment."

The Association of May Court Clubs of Canada is a women's service club that traces its roots to 1898 when Lady Aberdeen, wife of Governor General of Canada Lord Aberdeen, made a challenge to Canadian women to serve their communities, using their gifts and skills to help those less fortunate. Lady Aberdeen also founded the Victorian Order of Nurses and was a stanch Presbyterian. May Courts is looking to start new chapters across Canada and find more members.



A flea market fundraiser by the St. Catharines chapter of May Court Clubs of Canada.

There are currently nine clubs in Ontario including Barrie, Brockville, Chatham, Kitchener-Waterloo, London, Oakville, Ottawa, St. Catharines and Windsor.

Visit www.maycourtclubsofcanada.org to learn more. – *AM*



Canadians marched outside of Toronto's City Hall on March 22 for World Water Day, a time for countries to draw attention to the United Nations' recommendations for global access to fresh water. Led by KAIROS and other social justice bodies, protesters were pressing for community control of water services throughout the world.

The event coincided with the last day of the World Water Forum in Mexico, where international finanical institutions, multinational corporations and government officials discussed the growing trend of privatizing water resources. World Water Day has been observed since 1993.

Golf fundraiser does more than raise money

Trinity York Mills, Toronto, and Evangel Hall are teaming up for the fourth straight year to raise money for the inner-city mission. "People in the community see a congregation doing something that's not abstract. And there's real excitement in the church," said Jerry Crowder, an elder at Trinity.

Crowder said community involvement, cooperation among congregations and denominations, and raising the church's profile to attract newcomers are the "bigger picture" benefits of the event. "And it can be done with other projects, in other areas of the country," Crowder told the *Record*. "The challenge is, how can this be replicated in Vancouver or Halifax?"

The event began as an idea of Trinity's minister, Rev. Ferne Reeve and the donation of a day's use of a nearby golf course owned by a congregation member. Happening this year on June 13 at Pheasant Run Golf Club in Newmarket, about 140 golfers pay $250 each to participate. About 50 companies and organizations sponsor the event to varying degrees, and in the last three years, $150,000 has been raised for Evangel Hall. Crowder said that where possible, congregations should set lofty fundraising goals – setting their sights on raising $50,000 instead of $500. "It's a lot of work, but we have a lot of fun and there's a lot of learning that happens."

Trinity is willing to offer its insight to help other congregations get started. Contact: 416-447-5136 or Trinityyorkmills@aol.com. – *AM*



Golfers, Evangel Hall staff and fundraising committee members enjoyed a chicken and shrimp dinner after a long day on the course last year. The annual fundraiser benefits Evangel Hall, a Toronto inner-city mission, and also includes a silent auction.



John Widdowson, Evangel Hall member, and Rev. Will Ingram sing at the worship service.

New Evangel Hall opens

PRESBYTERIANS AND OTHERS gathered for the dedication of Evangel Hall's brand new $13-million facility in downtown Toronto on February 5. Construction began in June 2004 and replaces the building the mission had been using since 1913. The new six-storey facility includes 84 low-income housing units, as well as a medical clinic, commercial kitchen, counselling space, expanded thrift store, chapel and wheelchair accessibility. About 50 – 200 people drop in for meals daily, with many more gathering for fellowship, worship, addiction support, community dinners and special outings and activities. All programs started running in the new building in mid-February, with residents moving in by March. About 200 people attended the service at the new drop-in centre.

With Thanks to God

We acknowledge receipt of gifts from people who in their Last Will and Testament remembered The Presbyterian Church in Canada in 2005. These gifts, totaling $2,390,761, will continue the work of the Church in the areas of church extension, pensions for ministers and widows, overseas work and the general work of the Church.

Bailey, Thomas Melville
Boggs, Rev. Robert J. & Margaret C.
Chalmers, Phyllis Audrey
Clark, Mary Helen Frances
Coyle, Doreen Thelma
English, Mary Margaret
Herbert, Druscilla Jane
Johnston, Jessie
Johnston, Phyllis
Johnston, William Munro
Kennedy, Hamish Miller
MacKay, Eoin Sutherland
McNaughton, Etta Margaret
McNeice, Ella Sadie
Newson, Floyd Kenneth
Nichol, Verna Beatrice
O'Brien, David Alexander
Pierce, Iris Hazel
Proctor, Janet Elizabeth
Robb, Margaret Mary
Schwartzentruber, Elmer Ray
Sergeant, Sadie Kathleen
Thomson, Marie Jean
Tingle, Ruth Alix

Jail relocated for Armageddon

(ENI) — Israel is set to relocate a jail in Megiddo after an ancient church was discovered on its grounds last November. Although the historical claims have been debated, it is believed to be the oldest church ever found in the Holy Land.

As reported in the *Record's* February issue, the chapel provides new insight into early Christianity when it was a persecuted religion in the Holy Land. It also contains an inscription dedicated to a woman who dedicated an altar to "the God Jesus Christos," which is believed to be the earliest epigraphic reference to Jesus discovered.

Megiddo, also known as Armageddon, is where the last battle between good and evil is supposed to take place according to the Book of Revelation.

Pope Benedict XVI has expressed interest in visiting the excavation on any future trips to the Holy Land.

'Face failings honestly'

(ENI) — "To be at peace with God means knowing that we do not have to strive all the time for power over each other," said Rowan Williams, while dedicating a new cathedral in southern Sudan.

The head of the worldwide Anglican church delivered a message of peace to Christians and Muslims in the war-torn country. "Peace comes when we are at peace with God; we are at peace with God when we face our failings with honesty, we are at peace with one another when we share our power and resources."

World church bodies consider unifying

(AM) — The world's major international ecumenical bodies are proposing joint work, meetings and even a merger in the near future, signifying "an appetite for renewal and reform" within these bodies, according to Rev. Stephen Kendall, principal clerk of the Presbyterian Church and chairman of the finance committee at the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. "Primarily, it's an expression of the unity of the church," said Kendall.

WARC is in the midst of working towards a possible merger with the Reformed Ecumenical Council. With more than 80 million Protestants, the new global body would be named the World Reformed Communion. Representatives from both councils met in February, and received unanimous recommendations to move forward. Talks about merging first began in 1998. All current members of both agencies–which includes the PCC–would automatically become members of the new body.

WARC is also discussing the possibility of holding its general council meetings (held every seven years) with the Lutheran World Federation and possibly the World Council of Churches. The idea was raised at WCC's General Assembly in Brazil in February.

Kendall, who will be at the November meeting of LWF and WARC in Geneva where the proposal will be discussed further, said while the merger with REC would be an "organic union," the joint meeting with LWF is simply "looking towards the possibilities of working more closely together."

This "appetite for renewal" is due, at least in part, to "the financial realities that force these bodies to be efficient in how they do their work," said Kendall. "But part of that efficiency is about leaning towards greater unity," he said, noting that reformed churches have historically been chosen to be very separate entities.

The Caribbean and North American Area Council, a regional arm of WARC, could be affected, although exactly how still remains to be seen. If WARC merges with REC, it would likely become a regional body of that organization, said Kendall, and could possibly gain more members from the additional churches that would belong to the new body.

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"Shaping Transformational Church Leaders"

The passion of the penguins

Frothing ideologues bend nature to their will

BY ANDREW FAIZ

In the madcap world of gender and religious politics in the United States, Roy and Silo, two male penguins at New York City's Central Park Zoo, were a *cause célèbre* for years. They spawned a children's book *And Tango Makes Three,* of which *The School Library Journal* said, "They cuddle and share a nest like the other penguin couples and when all the others start hatching eggs, they want to be parents, too."

For pro-gay ideologues, Roy and Silo were proof that homosexuality is natural—seen commonly in nature. That is perhaps why *March of the Penguins* was taken up by conservative ideologues when it opened in theatres last summer. The documentary, which won at the Oscars this year, is the account of one year in the life of a colony of emperor penguins in Antarctica.

Conservative film critic Michael Medved said of the movie that it "most passionately affirms traditional norms like monogamy, sacrifice and child rearing ... This is the first movie [many religious conservatives have] enjoyed since *The Passion of the Christ*. This is the passion of the penguins."

Churches organized trips to see the movie—the way they had *The Passion*. Ben Hunt, with the 153 House Churches Network of Ohio, said, "Some of the circumstances they experienced seemed to parallel those of Christians. The penguin falling behind is like some Christians falling behind. The path changes every year, yet they find their way, is like the Holy Spirit." (I'd love to hear what he does with Carl Jung.)

This was proof to conservative ideologues of intelligent design—that God had made the penguins, apparently to teach humans a lesson about family values. The editor of *National Review* told a youth gathering, "It is an amazing movie. And I have to say; penguins are the really ideal example of monogamy. These things—the dedication of these birds is just amazing."

If you've seen the documentary, you might be scratching your head over all this: Penguins are serially monogamous, changing partners each year. And, while they work communally to protect the young, they seem sanguine amongst adults: If a penguin falls behind, a penguin dies. After mating, the females go for a beach holiday while the males protect the egg in the 50-below winds. I know at least one woman who would love that to be instituted. (Hi, dear!)

And, not to deny that God made these surreal creatures, they don't seem to be ideally designed for their circumstances. While graceful in water, they walk awkwardly, adding much stress and effort to their annual mating trek. They keep the eggs on their feet, warming them with a little flap of skin, which is a good way to lose them whenever they have to be passed between mother and father. It's not the strongest evidence for an argument on intelligent design or family values. Then again, I'm not a frothing ideologue.

But there are many who fill my void: Worldnetdaily.com is a conservative website and it was practically chortling when Silo left Roy to hook up with a female penguin. Columnist Robert Knight wrote, "For homosexual activists, embarrassment over this penguin breakup has to rank right up there with Anne Heche leaving Ellen De Generes and marrying ... a man." Along the way he took an egregious shot at



the *New York Times*: "[The newspaper] has been annoyed of late because the hit movie *March of the Penguins* is stubbornly heterosexual and pro-family with nary a gay penguin in sight."

Poor *Times*. The Left loves to quote it as the voice of the military-industrial complex—Noam Chomsky fills his essays with its articles. The Right quotes it as proof of a lefty agenda. What neither side, filled with its own narrow definitions, seems to understand is that reportage is only raw material—it proves nothing unto itself. If we have anything to learn from penguins, it is as C.S. Lewis once said, that nature is merely a mirror that reflects back what we believe.

Andrew Faiz is a writer, producer and filmmaker. He is also managing editor of the *Record*. You can reach him at mngeditor@presbyterianrecord.ca.



An utterly

Intelligent design might be irreducibly complex but it isn't science

There is a grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being evolved.

– CHARLES ROBERT DARWIN, *THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES*

Charles Darwin had it all figured out. He had reached a new conclusion; a theory of evolution that would, when published in 1859, change the way human beings understood life on Earth. Yet, he could never reconcile the origins of species as he saw it with his faith. On Nov. 25, 1860, he wrote to botanist and colleague Asa Gray: "I am conscious that I am in an utterly hopeless muddle. I cannot think that the world as we see it, is the result of chance; and yet I cannot look at each separate thing as the result of design ... Again, I say I am, and shall ever remain, in a hopeless muddle."

One hundred and forty-six years later the debate on evolution continues. Indeed, the issue has become even more muddled since intelligent design entered the fray. Intelligent design is a theory that complex biological structures show evidence of having been designed, as opposed to happening through a long series of trials and errors. Components in nature are so intricate and interdependent that they cannot be explained by Darwin's evolution theory. Intelligent design differs from creationism in that it does not rely on a strict biblical interpretation of creation as described in Genesis.

In 1996, a biochemist at Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, wrote a book that pushed the issue. In *Darwin's Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution,* Michael J. Behe presented a scientific argument for the existence of God. Behe is a senior fellow at the Discovery Institute in Seattle, Washington, the main organization to which most of the scientists and theorists supporting intelligent design belong. In his book, he discussed the implications for neo-Darwinism of what he calls "irreducibly complex" biochemical systems.

He writes: "By irreducibly complex I mean a single system composed of several well-matched, interacting parts that contribute to the basic function, wherein the removal of any one of the parts causes the system to effectively cease functioning. An irreducibly complex system cannot be produced directly … by slight, successive modifications of a precursor system, because any precursor to an irreducibly complex system that is missing a part is by definition nonfunctional. An irreducibly complex biological system, if there is such a thing, would be a powerful challenge to Darwinian evolution." Behe is among a growing group of accomplished scientists in the U.S. and Canada who are compiling, in the scientific manner in which they've been trained, a body of evidence in support of intelligent design.

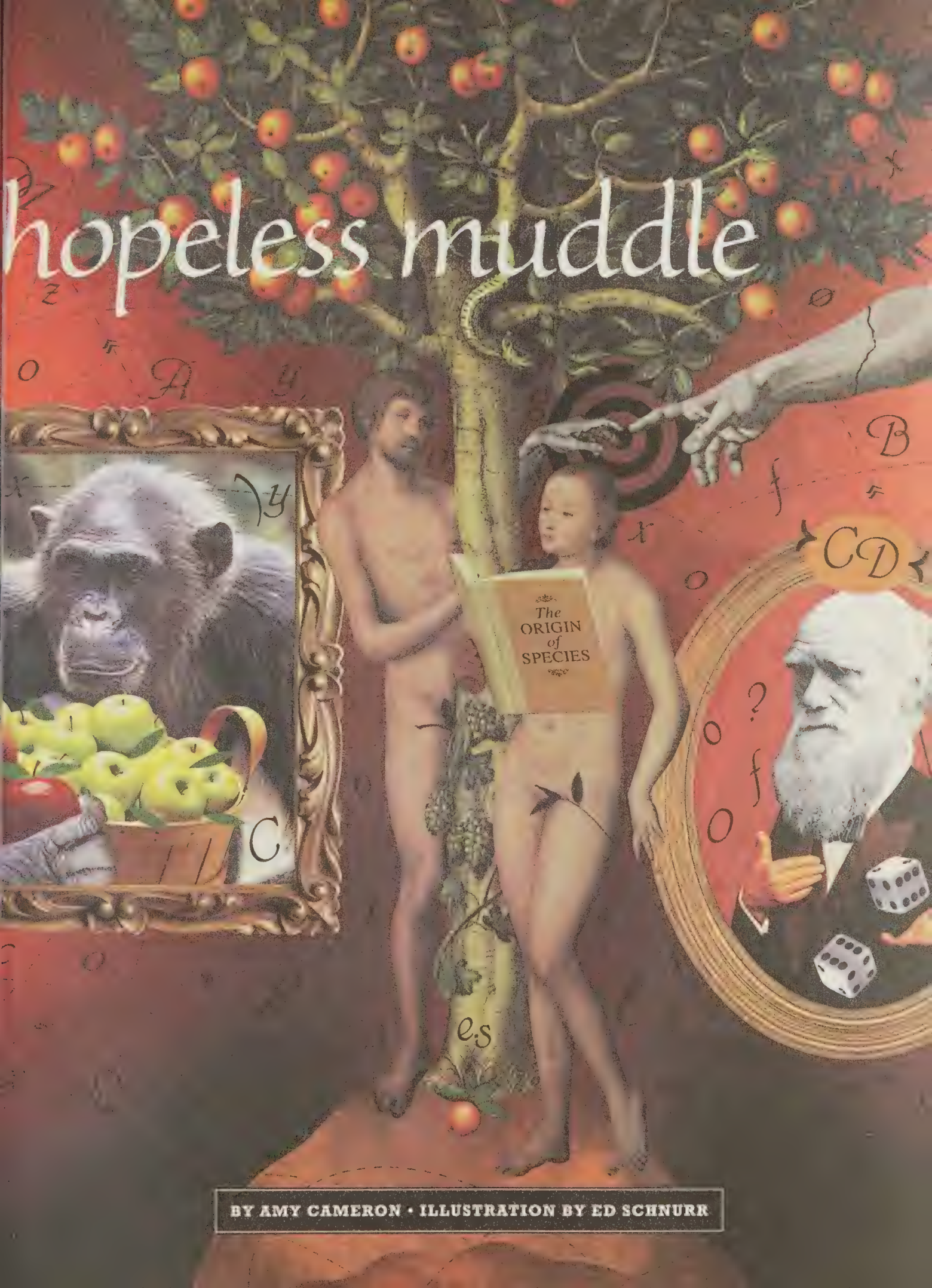
Denyse O'Leary became interested in the issue of intelligent design in 1996. She ultimately quit her job as a book editor in order to write *By Design or by Chance? The Growing Controversy On the Origins of Life in the Universe.* O'Leary, a science and faith journalist, is a Roman Catholic who attends Holy Family Church in Toronto. "I'm not required to believe that evolution did or did not happen," she says. "My own view as a Christian is that there is indeed a divine mind and that is a real factor in the creation of the universe. There is reasonable evidence for my position. I can defend it by pointing to evidence, to science and not just by saying the Bible says it's so."

She suggests that there are two possibilities for the creation of the universe. The first is that "there are zillions of flopped universes out there and ours is an accidental success." The second is that our universe is a success because it was designed that way. "The only thing that would back up a materialist point of view is zillions of flopped universes. It is just as reasonable for me to believe that it was all fine-tuned because our universe is all fine-tuned."

O'Leary is careful to add that she does not think that, at this time, intelligent design should be taught in high school biology classes—unless students want to talk about it. She points to the example of the Discovery Institute. "They don't believe it should be taught in high school. They constantly speak out against it, legitimately and genuinely."

In fact, the Institute's position is a little more complex. In

hopeless muddle



BY AMY CAMERON • ILLUSTRATION BY ED SCHNURR

January 2006, a California high school withdrew an elective class titled Philosophy of Design after an attorney for the Institute testified before the El Tejon Unified School District and asked that the class be cancelled. In a statement, the lawyer—Casey Luksin—said: "While we are pleased by the outcome in this case, we continue to believe that teaching objectively about intelligent design is permissible in public school science classes and is certainly acceptable for philosophy or social studies courses." He adds that the Institute offered to "work with the district and with Americans United to create a philosophy course on origins which people on all sides agree would be acceptable and that they could re-teach next year." The Institute's concern about the elective class in California was that the course was actually misrepresenting the theory.

While the majority of Canada's education ministries don't have a formal policy regarding intelligent design, in the late 1990s the Ministry of Education in British Columbia confirmed a strong stand on the issue for their public schools. "Concern may be expressed by some students and parents because the evolutionary perspective of modern biology conflicts with personal religious beliefs," reads an integrated curriculum resource for teachers entitled Course Requirements Respecting Beliefs.

"Teachers should respect these religious beliefs; however, because religious beliefs and views flowing from religious beliefs on these matters are not derived from the discipline of biological science, teachers should refrain from providing instruction in or requiring discussion on these beliefs. Under no circumstances may a teacher as part of a science course provide instruction in a religious dogma or religious belief system."

The curriculum package further identifies the beliefs or viewpoints as anything commonly characterized as creationism, theory of divine creation, intelligent design theory or other theories based on religious beliefs. Indeed, religious instruction in schools has been prohibited in B.C. public schools since 1865. An individual school district, however, may choose to develop a comparative religions course as an elective for its students.

"It doesn't become so much of an issue for us but it does come up from time to time," says Lori Abbott, a spokesperson for the Toronto District School Board, the largest public school board in Canada. "From our point of view, we wouldn't shy away from a discussion if it came up in class."

The issue of intelligent design caught fire recently in the United States when, in October 2004, the Dover Area School District in Pennsylvania voted to become the first to require that this theory be taught alongside evolution in high school biology classes. Teachers were told to read a four-paragraph statement to students that stated, "Because Darwin's Theory is a theory, it continues to be tested as new evidence is discovered. The Theory is not a fact. Gaps in the Theory exist for which there is no evidence.... Intelligent Design is an explanation of the origin of life that differs from Darwin's view."

Seven parents (four of whom had children in high school) and a former high school science teacher in the Dover area filed a lawsuit in December 2004, challenging the constitutional validity of the board's action. "It is contended that the ID [intelligent design] policy constitutes an establishment of religion prohibited by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution," read court files in the case of Kitzmiller v. Dover Area School District.

In December 2005, a U.S. district judge ruled in favour of the parents, saying not only does the policy of teaching intelligent design violate the Constitution but that it amounts to teaching a secular version of creationism and should be struck down "to preserve the separation of church and state."

Dr. Brian Alters holds the Tomlinson Chair in science education at McGill University in Montreal. The founder and director of McGill's evolution and education research centre, Alters was also one of the six expert witnesses called by the plaintiffs in Kitzmiller v. Dover. "The school was advocating that this was good pedagogy. That alternate scientific theories increases critical thinking and it is good for the students to do this," Alters explains. "Critical thinking is a noble goal. In a science classroom, you do that by comparing science to science. Intelligent design is not science. Scientists do not say, 'Well, we can't figure out a natural cause so we might as well chalk it up to a higher being or some extraterrestrial.' That's a terrible thing to do to students."

Alters, the author of *Defending Evolution: A Guide to the Evolution/Creation*

DOVER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT STATEMENT TO STUDENTS:



The Pennsylvania Academic Standards require students to learn about Darwin's Theory of Evolution and eventually to take a standardized test of which evolution is a part.

Because Darwin's Theory is a theory, it continues to be tested as new evidence is discovered. The Theory is not a fact. Gaps in the Theory exist for which there is no evidence. A theory is defined as a well-tested explanation that unifies a broad range of observations.

Intelligent design is an explanation of the origin of life that differs from Darwin's view. The reference book, *Of Pandas and People*, is available for students who might be interested in gaining an understanding of what Intelligent design actually involves.

With respect to any theory, students are encouraged to keep an open mind. The school leaves the discussion of the *Origins of Life* to individual students and their families. As a Standards-driven district, class instruction focuses upon preparing students to achieve proficiency on Standards-based assessments.

Controversy, explains that the centralized education system in Canada has helped stem the tide of intelligent design in classrooms. While the U.S. has approximately 15,000 school districts (officials are elected to the boards) that are essentially autonomous, Canada relies on provincial ministries of education that determine curricula. That does not mean, however, that it is not an issue here. There is a trend among science teachers that deeply worries Alters. "What's bothering us most at the evolution centre is to hear teachers say, 'I don't like this debate. I didn't go into teaching to get into a cultural war so I'm going to de-emphasize evolution.' "

David Begun is a paleoanthropologist whose research focuses on great ape and human origins. A professor at the University of Toronto, Begun has made a point of raising the issue of intelligent design in his first year seminar course in order to illustrate the difference between biology, social science and humanities. "Many students are surprised or confused that this is an issue," he says. "Origin stories are social anthropological phenomena and have nothing to do with science. Intelligent design is a fairly sneaky way to introduce faith-based origins into a science curriculum."

It is possible for science and faith to cohabitate peacefully, says Begun. Many scientists explore faith from a personal perspective, but when they're wearing their lab coats, scientists must be, first and foremost, scientists. "We want to be free to practice our discipline. There are very few scientists who would tell religious scholars how to do their job. We don't want the religious community to tell us how to do ours."

Begun also believes that another element lurks beneath the surface in this debate. "In the U.S., there is a fundamentalist Christian political movement that seeks to influence policy at the highest levels. That is not part of the political agenda in Canada."

But it is in the United States, where President George Bush announced intelligent design should be taught in schools—though the decision should rest with school districts rather than the federal government. "Part of education is to expose people to different schools of thought," Bush told Texas newspaper reporters in an interview. While proponents of intelligent design were overjoyed with the president's statement, evolutionary theorists and scientists were incensed. Barry W. Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, called his comments "irresponsible."

As the issue of teaching the theory of evolution in American schools became more and more heated, the Office of Theology and Worship at the Presbyterian Church (USA) released a theological statement on intelligent design, creationism and evolution. "Neither Scripture, our Confession of Faith, nor our Catechisms teach the Creation of man by the direct and immediate acts of God so as to exclude the possibility of evolution as a scientific theory," reads the statement. "Nowhere is the process by which God made, created or formed man set out in scientific terms. A description of this process in its physical aspects is a matter of natural science. The Bible is not a book of science."

The Church asks Christians to deal seriously with scientific findings and insists that the theory of evolution does not fall within the purview of the Permanent Theological Committee. "The real and only issue," the Church states, "is whether there exists clear incompatibility between evolution and the Biblical doctrine of Creation. Unless it is clearly necessary to uphold a basic Biblical doctrine, the Church is not called upon and should carefully refrain from either affirming or denying the theory of evolution."

In 1998, the church's Presbyterian Panel surveyed a number of its 2.4 million members on the issue of science, technology and the Christian faith. The results were overwhelming: 99 per cent of pastors and 96 per cent of elders and members believe that the universe came into being through the agency of God. Though American Presbyterians are clearly creationists to an extent, the majority of specialized clergy, pastors, elders and members think that evolutionary theory is "compatible with the idea of God as Creator." When the survey narrowed in on the idea of human beings developing from earlier species of animals, however, 53 per cent of members disagreed. (See sidebar for more information.)



THE SURVEY SAYS

This is an excerpt of the PC(USA) survey Science, Technology and the Christian Faith.

The universe was created by God
Pastors – 99% agreed
Specialized clergy – 97% agreed
Elders & Members – 96% agreed

The universe is less than 10,000 years old
Pastors – 4% agreed
Specialized clergy – 2% agreed
Elders – 4% agreed
Members – 5% agreed

The universe began with a huge explosion (The Big Bang theory)
Pastors – 69% agreed
Specialized clergy – 72% agreed
Elders – 47% agreed
Members – 43% agreed

Evolutionary theory is compatible with the idea of God as Creator
Pastors – 85% agreed
Specialized clergy – 91% agreed
Elders – 67% agreed
Members – 61% agreed

Human beings, as we know them today, developed from earlier species of animals
Pastors – 38% disagreed
Specialized clergy – 26% disagreed
Elders – 51% disagreed
Members – 53% disagreed

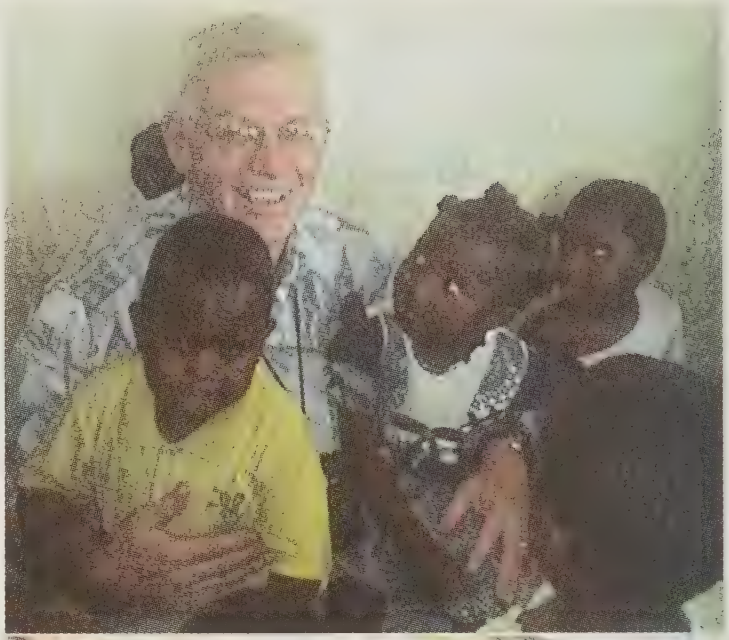
Clearly, from these results, Presbyterians have no more insight into this complex issue than Darwin. With so much evidence for both sides of the intelligent design v. evolution debate, it is difficult to muddle through the mess and find answers. But, as a scientist who is also a biblical literalist once said to Alters, "I don't know how it works. I'm only a feeble human. But when I die, it's the first question I will ask God."

Amy Cameron is a frequent contributor to the *Record.*

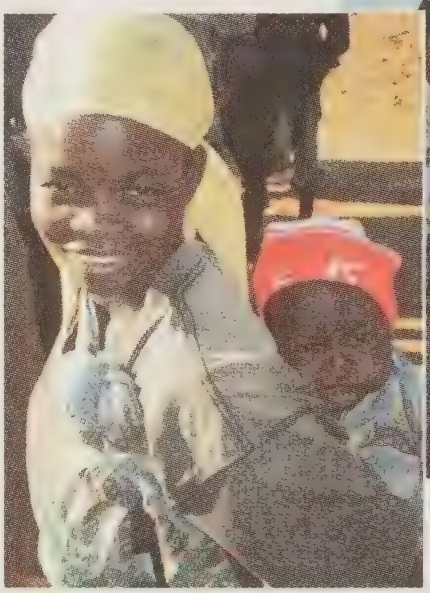
Something not right

If despair could be a place it would be a palliative care ward in Malawi

by Dave Mansell







Rev. Glen Davis, top, and Heather Mansell, above, meet with the giants of faith in the warm heart of Africa.

Before my wife, Heather, and I left for Malawi in sub-Saharan Africa last November, many friends and acquaintances advised us that this trip would be a life-changing experience—one we would never forget. They could not have been more right. As we drove into Blantyre, the largest city in the south of the country, our first impression was "this is not right—this is not normal." Now that we are back in Canada we look around and think to ourselves "this is not right—this is not normal." We had both done our homework and had read in-depth the articles and publications relating to the AIDS situation in Africa but all the studying could not have prepared us for what we were about to see. In Malawi, which is called the warm heart of Africa, we looked upon the faces that went with the numbers. We saw the giants of faith and marveled at an inner strength the Lord bestows on those who reach out to Him during times of hardship.

If despair could be a place it would surely be the palliative care ward of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Blantyre. As we walked through the corridors lined with patients and their families, past small rooms of six or eight beds where the highest level of modern medicine was an intravenous unit, all the words and all the adjectives from all that we had read of the plight of this part of the globe that the world seemed to have forgotten fell silent and knelt before the sound of tears and the vacuum of hopelessness. We entered a room approximately 40 feet by 40 feet that would serve as the last light of life for 200 patients. They lay two to a bed, they lay on the floors or propped up against the wall. They were cared for by just two nurses who could offer them only aspirin for pain relief (which they would run out of frequently). As we shuffled through the ward I looked down on these poorest of people and from sunken and darkened eyes they looked up at me as if to ask, "Why are you here?" It was a question I asked myself many times during our time in Malawi and I still ask myself months later.

From there we went to the orphan day cares established by the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, where over 100 children all under the age of five greeted us with joy and energy. The contrast was striking which made our surprise all the greater. We were met with cheers of delight whenever our cameras flashed and they would group around us in wonder when we showed them the images in the viewfinder. Here we found some of the answers to some of the questions that so many people have asked as they considered the solutions to the seeming unending problems of developing countries. Here was the physical result of human compassion. The real manifestation of our God's power at work in the hearts of those that care. We left knowing that the Lord was indeed moving in Malawi.

– *Dave Mansell is a member of St. Andrew's, Arnprior, Ont.*



Dusty roads await the rains to wash them clean.

On a dusty road to healing

'What has kept you going? Where has been your support?'

by Joy Robinson

We were walking along a dusty village road, across a muddy creek with its slimy green pools of water that were waiting for the rains to come and wash them clean; pools that were being used for local laundry.

We were on our way from the home of one of the villagers. He had been in business, quite wealthy before AIDS manifested itself in the black cancer that creeps up the legs and over the whole body. His wife, with the children, had left him and he was grateful to his sister who had taken him in. There was resignation in every line of his body, but a force of life too. "You have lost your status, your livelihood, your wife and family. How do you cope with such losses?" I asked. And his face lit up. "I have faith in Jesus," he said.

Four women were telling us their stories; stories of their husbands' deaths, the intervention of the home care team, their own testing for HIV and their hopes that somehow they would survive long enough to establish some kind of small business so that they would not leave their children penniless and helpless orphans.

The room was small, hot and crowded and as I listened I wondered how to ask the speakers how they survived such pain and anguish. My words would be translated by Anderson, the home care and orphan care project leader. Well I asked. "What has kept you going, where has been your support?" And as I spoke one of the four women grabbed the hands of the blue shirted home care volunteer and raised their arms high in the air in a triumphant gesture. On the back of the volunteer's shirt were the words, "We love because He first loved us."

I nodded humbly with tears in my eyes.

– Joy Robinson is a member of St. Andrew's, Kamloops, B.C.



The room was small, hot and crowded as they shared stories of pain and anguish. "Because He first loved us."

Malawi's three superwomen

Esther, Grace and Maria are leading the fight against Malawi's gender-based disease

by Michelle Miller

AIDS has become a gender-based disease in Africa where women and girls are most at risk. In Malawi, women represent 56.8 per cent of HIV-positive adults. In many parts of Africa, girls are born into a society where they have no rights. Many face marital rape and men refusing to use condoms.

Esther, Grace and Maria are among the strongest women in Malawi. Esther has dedicated the past 16 years of her life to Ekwendeni's AIDS hospital. She has witnessed the increase of children orphaned by AIDS in the catchment areas and she strives to stretch a small budget to cover a destitute community's needs.

Grace is the coordinator of the prevention of mother-to-child transmission program at the hospital. Thanks to this program, mothers and other women caring for young children have a space to gather and share and be educated on how to care for a potentially sick infant if and when they might be sick themselves.



The superwomen: Esther Lupafya, Maria Silo and Grace Chunda make AIDS ribbon pins. Grace was hired with the support of funds raised through the PCC's Toward a World Without AIDS campaign.

Maria learned that she was infected with AIDS in 1998 and has since decided to go public with her HIV status and share her story with others. This was very courageous as many people are afraid to have contact with an HIV-positive person and as a result, many are ostracized. I spent an afternoon with Maria near Lake Malawi and realized that she really is the perfect role model for Malawian women. She has lived a difficult life and is raising her own children as well as some of her nieces and nephews who have lost their own parents. She was recently appointed assistant home-based care supervisor and teaches people the importance of knowing their HIV status. To help make ends meet she works with beads making AIDS ribbon pins. As I watched her nimble fingers work to make as many pins as possible, it occurred to me that perhaps Maria had been chosen as one of God's messengers and she is telling people about the light. Even in a world of darkness, where HIV and AIDS, poverty and discrimination and stigma are everywhere, the light still shines and people who meet Maria spread this light to others.



Maria has a wonderful sense of humour and a great desire to live. While the rest of us were swimming, she stood by and watched us shyly. I gave her a pair of shorts and a T-shirt and told her to join us. She told me that she hadn't been swimming since 1998. Watching her splash around, giggling and laughing like a school girl and attempt the front crawl was a moving moment for me. As I thought about all she had told me about her past, I was glad to see her laugh.

Women continue to be afraid to voice their opinions and concerns for fear of being victimized. Esther, Grace and Maria all seem to have realized that in order to bring about change in their societies it is essential to question all assumptions, be informed, speak out and take responsibility for one's life.

– Michelle Miller is a member of Rosedale, Toronto.

See the Record's website for an article by missionary Dr. Rick Allen on the AIDS crisis in Africa.

My African blessing

by Annemarie Klassen

I was hungry and you fed me,
I was thirsty and you gave me water,
I was sick and you visited me ...

On a hot Saturday afternoon in Malawi during an unscheduled 15-minute stop at a busy local market, I took a bad step. One bad step, taken too quickly, walking down a little hill while turning to look at a beautiful flowering tree. In the horror of that moment I almost lost consciousness. For a moment I didn't know where I was. The impossible hope that it was just a bad sprain quickly vanished as I felt the dead weight of my foot wobbling back and forth, much like a mop dangling at the end of a broomstick. An x-ray in the Mzuzu hospital revealed nasty breaks on both sides of my left ankle, requiring surgery. I had to be airlifted to a hospital in Johannesburg. Since the airstrip in Mzuzu had no landing lights and since it was now late afternoon, arrangements were made for me to stay until the plane arrived the next afternoon.

We were in Malawi on an HIV/AIDS exposure tour with PWS&D, led by Karen Plater. News of the accident spread quickly the next morning in church, and for the remainder of the day I had a steady stream of Malawian visitors. Early in the morning, a minister walking to his church service heard of the mishap and made a detour to come and pray with me—a beautiful prayer for my health and healing and also for my family at home.

When church was over, others started coming—the moderator and the general secretary of the synod, clergy and others who work for the synod caring for the sick and the poor. One by one, they expressed their sympathy. "I am so sorry, I am so sorry."

Esther and Grace (see article by Michelle Miller), sitting on the concrete floor at the foot of my bed, would not leave until they knew I was safely on my way to Johannesburg. They are strong, courageous women of faith—both work for the synod caring tirelessly for people affected by HIV and AIDS. Now they were caring for me. If only they had known about the accident sooner, they said, the room would have been full of people singing for me because "that is what we do in Africa."



The mission team visits Annemarie at her hospital bed. From left, Gordon Timbers, Ian Fraser, Diana Veenstra, Karen Plater and Mwali, their driver.

I was given communion by two elderly clergy—a man and a woman—while a group of young people sang softly in the most exquisite African harmonies. The only word I recognized was Jesu, and I wept softly as I realized how incredibly blessed I was to be experiencing God's grace in this way.

"Africa will be a blessing." These had been the parting words of Richard Fee as I was leaving for Africa. And it was a blessing, but in ways I never expected.

Especially, I was blessed by the people of Malawi—the named and the unnamed. The same people who minister to the hungry, the thirsty, the sick on a daily basis and with persistent faith, ministered to me in the name of Christ. In a profound and moving way, I became the "one" in need, the person at the centre of the story. In this I am humbled and blessed.

As the plane soared higher into the sky I peered out the window and saw many arms waving farewell. This vision will remain with me for the rest of my life. It is my African blessing.

–Annemarie Klassen is associate secretary for Stewardship and Education for Mission at church offices. She wishes to thank Karen Plater, Dr. Andy Gaston of the Mzuzu hospital, Rick Fee and Donna Wilkinson (who flew with her to Johannesburg, forsaking a beach vacation) for their kindness and care.

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Massaging the mission

Collingwood raises over $11,000 for AIDS orphans



As convener of the Presbyterian World Service & Development committee, Rev. Karen Horst had the opportunity to reach out to Malawi's AIDS orphans. Malawi has been struck particularly hard with the AIDS pandemic and its destruction affects every layer of society. Children are particularly vulnerable when the adults who normally provide for their security are dead of AIDS. The community of Collingwood and First Presbyterian quickly understood the pressing need and set about preparing a memorable fundraiser.

We called it our Body and Soul Spa for AIDS and we invited countless specialists in our community to donate their time in order that the proceeds from the tickets, which we sold for $100 each, could all go to Africa. In addition, we invited businesses and shops to donate items for a silent auction. We were overwhelmed by the generosity of the people in our community who celebrated the opportunity to volunteer their specialized gifts to help these children in Africa. From naturopath to chiropractor to registered massage therapist to aesthetician, people joined in with great enthusiasm to the point that we had to ask some volunteers to wait until next year since we had no more room for any other treatments.

We raised $11,245 in one day, though it took eight months to organize the event.

And, it was more than just a fundraiser. From setting up a data base for pre-registration to draping the church with elegant fabric and mini-lights, the team spent tireless hours from April until mid-November when the event was held on a Friday night. Many people came to our church that night for the first time and were touched by the deep passion and commitment of members to make a difference in the world. We became an extended family, ministering to a number of our volunteers from the community who faced crises during the preparation time event. So many of the volunteer professionals indicated how this event was a spiritual experience for them because they were able to use their gifts to help people in need. Many of the participants, weary from the regular challenges of daily living, found respite and compassion in the care offered in each treatment. Truly, the Holy Spirit was present in our midst in a mighty way. Every member of the team has already decided that they will do it again this year with our proceeds going to a local shelter for families fleeing domestic violence.

If you wish to know any further details regarding this event and how you might organize such a venture in your own congregation, do not hesitate to contact Rev. Karen Horst at rkhorst@execulink.com or call First, Collingwood, Ont. at 705-445-4651.

The Presbyterian mystique

Does a 40-year-old lecture still speak to us?

BY JOSEPH MCLELLAND

It began with Pierre Berton's 1965 book The Comfortable Pew, *commissioned by the Anglican church, which had chapter headings such as Pretensions to Absolute Rightness, The Lukewarm Pulpit and The Ecclesiastical Caste System. It was a hot-button book at the time, much discussed and debated, in which Berton laid out "some of the areas in which I see the church going bankrupt." The United Church of Canada produced* Why Our Sea is Boiling *the same year, seeking to refute Berton's claim, if only for that denomination. But, what of the Presbyterian Church?*

A Presbyterian theologian at McGill University, Joseph McLelland, delivered two addresses to the Toronto-Kingston Synod in the fall of 1965. It had been four decades since Union (when the boiling hot UCC was born) and McLelland wondered how the PCC was faring. He called his address, Why Our Pond is Lukewarm. *The two parts were The Presbyterian Mystique and The Presbyterian Ethos.*

Below is a brief excerpt of the first part (the complete lectures can be found on the Record's *website, along with an address to the 1967 Assembly Council). It has been four decades since McLelland challenged the church. Eight decades since Union—how are we doing? Does Union still cast a shadow over us? Do we still suffer delusions of grandeur? Are we still gazing steadfastly to the past?*

Next month McLelland will respond to his own speech.



I believe that we are dangerously close to loving The Presbyterian Church in Canada more than our Lord Jesus Christ. It seems more alive than He

Today, Presbyterians claim to be the only confessional church or theological church in Canada because we hold the Westminster Confession of Faith as our subordinate standard. Now this is partly true but largely a mystique, an ideology not adequate to the reality. My source for this claim is the brochure published for the 1965 General Assembly and made up of presbytery submissions to certain questions about our church's future, sent down by the Inter-Church Relations Committee. This little booklet has become affectionately known among us as our hate literature, and it is one of the most painful documents I have ever read. It contains more *non-sequiturs* and question-beggings than most essays by first-year theologians. It waves the 1925 flag in a manner determined to be a caricature. One presbytery affirms, "we may be trusted to emerge with the old blue banner aloft without the help of ecclesiastics." (I presume no clergyman wrote that?)

The document's basic assumption is that we have "a distinctive confessional ministry ... very conscious of the importance of a great confession." So far so good. But then a delusion of grandeur begins to appear—one presbytery holds that we maintain "within, and for the benefit of, the Holy Catholic Church, the whole substance of the Christian faith!" An individual submission, bristling with historical and factual errors, calls us "to continue to be the unique and indispensable

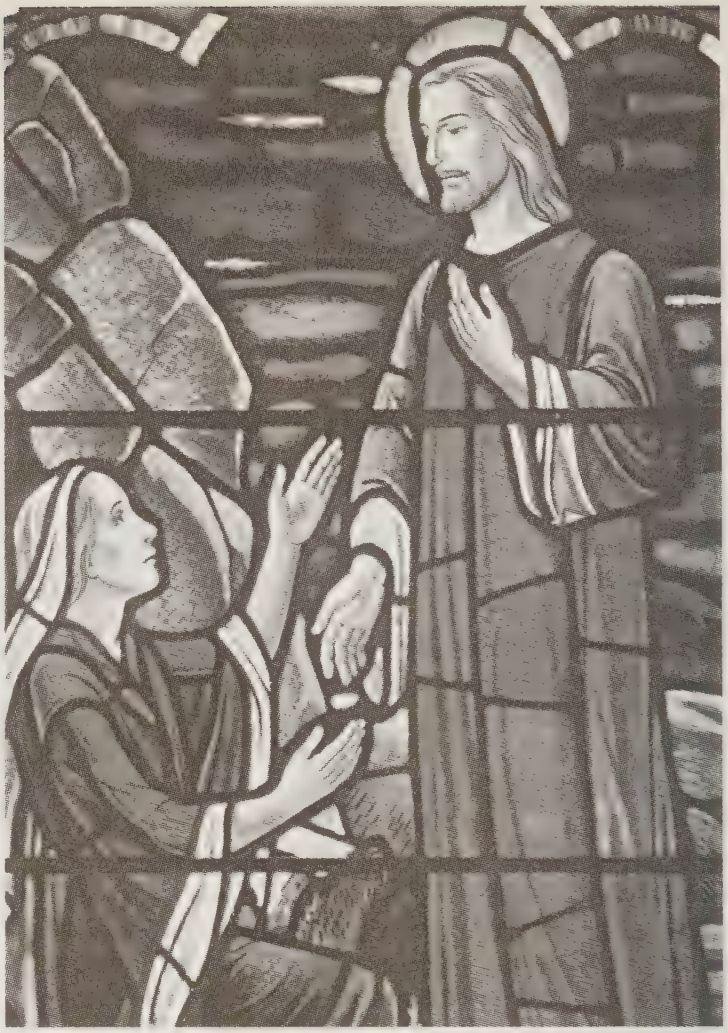
I am angry with our church because it is running scared, afraid that it may lose its life, afraid of what tomorrow will bring

denomination that we are," for we are responsible for preserving "in wholeness and purity, the faith which was once delivered unto the saints!"

In line with this basic position, this mystique, is the idea that it would constitute a compromise for us to unite with another denomination. This is constantly related to the popular idea among us—almost our official line—that since there is something called spiritual unity, there is no need of something called organic union. On this dubious distinction is built up a whole philosophy of diversity, with historical errors. Such as that the Reformation was the beginning of denominations or that the church is rather like the allied forces under one leader, or like a two-party system of government in which the opposition keeps the government "honest" (it is uncertain whether in this analogy we are government or opposition).

The question is: if the statement that believers already have unity in Christ is taken with strict logic, then why have any kind of visible church? Why have a Presbyterian Church in Canada indeed? Why do we stress our Presbyterian Church organic unity, our visible and organizational institution, insisting that everyone else needs us in order to be reminded that no one needs any visible unity? It seems that we are the exception which proves the rule; that God has developed a new covenant, with ourselves as the unique and indispensable vehicle in direct line of those Apostles to whom the truth was once delivered. (Shades of that sectarian smoke of succession which Calvin decried in his time!) Either such a view is the result of a perverted sense of humour or more likely, judging by the lack of humour with which it is presented, it is a myth, a fairy-tale, a mystique.

But positively now—can nothing more be said? Yes, three different presbyteries (Bruce, Red Deer, Victoria) grasped the possibility of denominational death and resurrection —that is, a trust in God who has power to raise the dead and therefore who does not depend simply on continuing institutions. And the Presbytery of Peace River recalled its own overture: "(Whereas) today's persistent use of a 17th-century document betrays the basic position of the Reformation of the *sola scriptura* and substitutes a version of *scriptura et traditio* that we deny other churches …." Yes indeed: we are not a confessional church just because we hold to the Westminster Confession as subordinate standard. That may be a good beginning; it is only a beginning. For one thing—are we bound to it so closely that we must confess it only and simply to be "the faith once for all delivered to the saints?" Does not the Confession itself tell us that all confessions are not the whole truth? Does it not bear the marks of its own time and place—its history betraying any claim to wholeness of truth? Think of the irony of its church-state teaching—the Westminster Assembly was called by the government and taught such a questionable doctrine on this point that in 1875 our Basis of Union rejected it. Not until 1954 did we fill the gap. Even worse, probably, is the philosophical problem in-



volved in accepting the Westminster Confession—you have to think like an Aristotelian to agree with much of its logic, and what modern person, Presbyterian at least, does so?

I say all this to illustrate my thesis; our mystique imagines that we are confessional because of the Westminster Confession, whereas we are confessional only if and insofar as we continue to probe that sole confession of the Apostles and prophets, which the Westminster fathers called "the Supreme Judge … the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture." Only a continuing exegesis and commentary and preaching can create a confessing church.

A church with a confessional position is an institution, regarding itself as possessing the whole truth and therefore unwilling to be self-critical, even unable to think of itself as at all sinful or incomplete or wrong: irreformable! It lives by a mystique, fashioning caricatures of itself and its enemies—stereotypes.

Here is a precious example of our Presbyterian stereotype mentality: In 1962, one of our young ministers published a letter advocating ecumenicity in an interdenominational journal—*Christian Outlook*. The reaction to this exposure was sharp and sudden, not only from individuals. One presbytery actually drafted an official reply: "None are so blind as those who will not see. He failed to see that unity of the Spirit does not require organic union." It concluded by suggesting that he either "be loyal to the flag—or leave our Church." It appears that critics are not permitted within the church …

So we return to this flag again, this true blue banner. That seems to be the real issue, the object of our mystique. We are not a confessing church seeking to adventure in whatever new ways a living Lord may want to lead us, but a confessional church seeking only to stand pat and to remove the disturbing elements while we gaze steadfastly backwards. How apt are the words of William Stringfellow, addressing our 1963 Mission Consultation: "The one great mark of a principality or corporation is that it says to man, your future, the meaning of your life, depend on the destiny, the survival of this principality." Or in the words of Coleridge: "He who begins by loving Christianity better than Truth, will proceed by loving his own sect or church better that Christianity and end in loving himself (his own peace) better than all."

I believe that we are dangerously close to loving The Presbyterian Church in Canada more than our Lord Jesus Christ. It seems more alive than He, it appears to be His very embodiment so that His future depends entirely on its future. So we who claim to be Protestant, Reformed, Presbyterian, are really more traditional, dogmatic and reactionary than that Church of Rome which today is in the travail of genuine renewal.

I plead for an end to our posture of debate and a cultivation of the new mood of dialogue. Debate means that only one side can have the truth. Dialogue is the Christian posture because it embodies our self-denial, our readiness to risk our past because Jesus Christ is alive and at work not just in the past but also today, and especially tomorrow.

He is alive! Therefore the church does not draw its strength from its past—not from its saints and heroes and reformers, but only from the living Christ whose servants they were. I am angry with our church because it is running scared, afraid that it may lose its life, afraid of what tomorrow will bring.

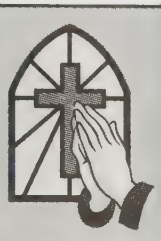
I want to see our church set free from preoccupation with her own past and her own future, free to emerge from that wilderness of her own choosing and enter the modern city, the terrible and wonderful new world where one thing above all is required from Christians—a celebration of the Christ who is already there, waiting for His followers to come out into the tempest of living.

For the complete text, please go to www.presbyterianrecord.ca.

Rev. Dr. Joseph McLelland is the Robert Professor Emeritus at Presbyterian College, Montreal and McConnell Professor Emeritus at McGill University. He was moderator of General Assembly in 1985.

Solution for Called to Wonder

The Lord is my shepherd
I shall not want
My shepherd leads me to green fields and beside quiet waters
My shepherd renews my spirit
I walk on right paths
Although I may go through dark shadows
I will not fear because I am not alone
The rod and staff of my shepherd give me comfort
The shepherd feeds me in the presence of my enemies
The shepherd anoints my head with oil and my cup overflows
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life
and I shall live in the house of the Shepherd-Lord forever



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June 28	*A Prayer to Know Christ's Love* Andrew Stirling, Senior Minister Timothy Eaton Memorial Church, Toronto, ON	Ephesians 3.14-21
July 5	*The Early Church: Praying Together* James Goodloe IV, Pastor Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, Richmond, VA	Acts 4.23-31
July 12	*John Calvin on the Life of Prayer* Victor Shepherd, Professor of Systematic Theology Tyndale Seminary, Toronto, ON	Psalm 55.1-3; 16-19
July 19	*Moses: Interceding for Others and for Himself* Donald Carson, Research Professor of New Testament Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL	Exodus 32-34
July 26	*Praying with Confidence* Scott Hoezee, Director, Center for Excellence in Preaching Calvin Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, Michigan	Luke 11.1-13
August 2	*A Prayer for Essentials* Dennis Ngien, Research Professor of Theology Tyndale Seminary, Toronto, ON	Psalm 90:12-17
August 9	*Elijah: Prayer and Spiritual Conflict* Marion Taylor, Associate Professor of Old Testament Wycliffe College, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON	1 Kings 18.16-40
August 16	*A Prayer for Enlightenment* John Vissers, Principal Presbyterian College, Montreal, PQ	Ephesians 1.15-23
August 23	*The Real Lord's Prayer* Kevin Livingston, Senior Minister Knox Presbyterian Church, Toronto, ON	John 17

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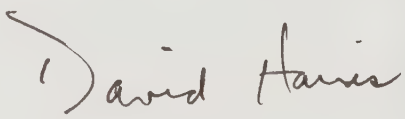
Your support will enable us to continue to publish the *Record* and bring a Presbyterian perspective to world events and to stories that affect our personal lives. As promised, we are planning to provide greater local, national and international coverage on the issues that matter to you as well as increasing the number of Presbyterian voices in the magazine.

We are also looking at new ways to increase our readership and improve our Web site, which we have noted more and more of you are visiting. Your support has made all of this possible.

We thank you very sincerely and look forward to providing you with a magazine that informs, inspires and connects you.



Rev. Ian Fraser
Convener



David Harris
Editor

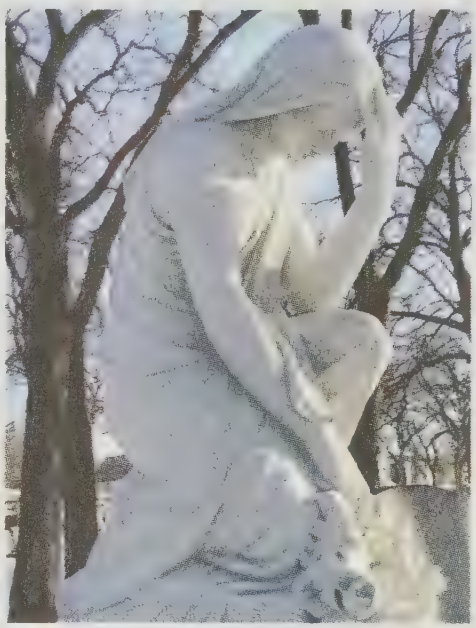
P.S. Donations and new subscriptions are welcome throughout the year!

On being a widow

'Look away across the sea, where mansions are prepared for thee'

BY GWYNETH WHILSMITH

It takes no talent to become a widow. There's no course of study. Your spouse dies and, then, there you are, a full-fledged widow but with absolutely no experience. And even though you knew weeks beforehand that this was going to happen (as I did) you still aren't as prepared as you thought you were going to be. When my husband Art drew his last breath and I knew he had passed on, I felt utterly bewildered, not knowing just what was expected of me. Should I weep and wail, or should I be quiet and stoic? Actually, I did both—weeping and wailing in private for myself, and quiet and stoic for my children who were suffering their own deep grief.



When my husband Art drew his last breath and I knew he had passed on, I felt utterly bewildered, not knowing just what was expected of me. Should I weep and wail, or should I be quiet and stoic?

Some people die young, some old, some slowly and in great pain while others leave this world in one blinding instant by accident or with a fatal heart attack. Whatever their mode of travel, they leave forever. There's no return route, no coming back. Death is final, the end, and that's what is so hard to grasp. No more sharing, no talking it over, no discussion of any kind. None. As deaths go, Art had a good one. He didn't have to enter the hospital; he died in a bed he had built, in a house he constructed, with all his children and most of his grandchildren in the room. Peace and gentleness surrounded us and you really can't expect better than that. Yet, he left such a hole in our lives.

We know now that he'd probably been born with a faulty heart valve, but he was always such a strong, healthy man, supporting his family through construction, a very satisfying but manually demanding vocation. He believed in a healthy diet and lots of exercise and for 25 summers before he died, he swam every morning and late afternoon, was always very careful about what he ate and wanted to live to see 100.

Art was sick for only six months and although doctors told us he was not a candidate for an operation, he never gave up hope, didn't want to die, believing help would come from some source. We tried different therapies which kept him more comfortable, but did nothing to halt death that came to him on Christmas Eve.

He was always a believer but because he was such a private man, rarely discussed his faith. One day, wanting to relieve what I perceived as his increasing anxiety, I steered the conversation toward the magnificent love of God into which we'll pass when we leave this world. His eyes filled with tears, "I know that, Gwyn, I just don't want to go now!" It was just too painful to think of leaving all the ones he loved so dearly.

However, the night before he died, I recounted for him the occasion when Jesus said goodbye to his disciples and told them he was going to prepare a place for them and then come back and take them where he was. "Imagine that, Art," I said. "He's going to come and take us to the place he's chosen for us."

"Well," Art whispered so low we barely heard, "you can't beat that." No, you certainly can't beat that.

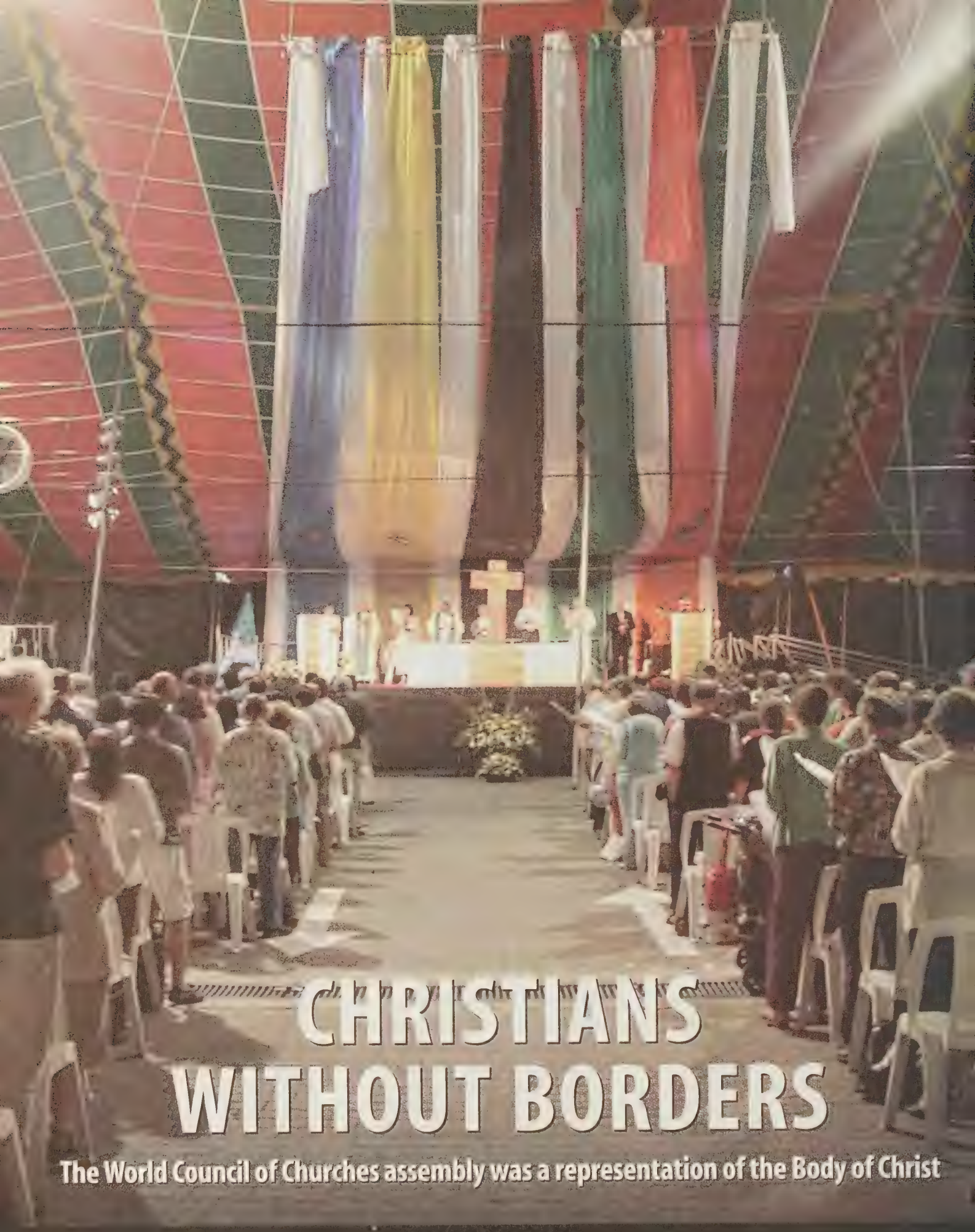
The next morning he was slipping quickly away but desperately trying to tell us something. While weakness made his words indecipherable, he kept struggling to say them. Finally, I took his face between my hands, kissed his cheek and said, "It's all right, Art. Don't worry about anything. Remember, I love you." His eyes flew open, and for an instant locked with mine, then he closed his eyes again, dropped his head to the side and died.

One of his favourite old hymns was Beulah Land, the chorus of which he often sang:

Beulah Land, sweet Beulah Land,
As on thy highest mount I stand,
I look away across the sea,
Where mansions are prepared for me,
And view the shining glory shore,
My heaven, my home, forevermore!

My husband had reached his Beulah Land and I had arrived at that fearful, unknown territory of widowhood.

Gwyneth Whilsmith is a contributing editor to the Record. This is the first of three articles.



CHRISTIANS WITHOUT BORDERS

The World Council of Churches assembly was a representation of the Body of Christ

BY WILL INGRAM

God, in your grace, transform the world.

It is a simple prayer, yet one that has implications for every facet of life. It is a prayer that acknowledges our need for divine grace, yet invites us to dream about how we might participate in the transformation of the world. This prayer, which served as the theme for the ninth assembly of the World Council of Churches in Porto Alegre, Brazil in February, articulates the dreams of Christians everywhere.

There were many highlights of the assembly. Speeches from Bishop Desmond Tutu, from the Archbishop of Canterbury and from the president of Brazil brought encouragement and challenge to the member churches. Moving presentations were offered by Christian young people, by Christians from indigenous cultures, by Vatican representatives and by the program officers of the WCC.

One of the greatest blessings of the assembly, however, had nothing to do with the substance of the speeches and presentations. Rather, the opportunity to catch a vision of the Body of Christ in such diversity and beauty—from so many denominational, linguistic and cultural backgrounds—was a rare privilege. And the opportunity to reflect upon our interconnectedness with the other members of that one Body was, in itself, transforming.

This deep interconnection became particularly apparent in a little Presbyterian congregation in Porto Alegre. A group of delegates and representatives, mostly from the reformed traditions, made our way to a local church for the Sunday worship service. We were warmly welcomed and were invited to introduce ourselves. Through the translator, I brought greetings from The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and mentioned that, in my presbytery, in West Toronto, there is a Portuguese-speaking church served by a Brazilian-born minister named Lincoln Resende. I finished my comments, and sat down.

There were a few more speakers and then a Presbyterian minister from Angola mentioned that his children had immigrated to Toronto—and were members at the very church that I had just mentioned. The Brazilian minister of the church in which we were worshipping said he also knew Lincoln Resende, through the Presbyterian Church in Brazil!

This unexpected reminder of the link between three Christians from three different countries on three different continents was an experience that offered a moving reminder of how interconnected we are in the church.

While that moment offered an opportunity for joyful celebration, the assembly offered a telling reminder that there are other dimensions to this interconnectedness. The New Testament clearly suggests that our life together is not only connected in times of joy, but also in times of struggle. In the first letter to the Corinthians, Paul wrote that God has arranged the Body so that "the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it. Now you are the Body of Christ and individually members of it."

This means, of course, that when other members of the Body suffer, as so many of them do, it is our calling to share with them in their struggles. I saw a sign at the assembly that, at first, seemed a jarring idea but which conveyed a powerful message. The sign read, The Body of Christ has AIDS. It is true—in Africa, in Asia, in Eastern Europe, in Canada and in every part of the world, the scourge of HIV/AIDS is a reality that is affecting the Body of Christ in a profound way. And the same can be said of crippling poverty, of the devastation of war, of the struggle for human dignity, of the damage that we are doing to the environment and of every other challenge facing this world. As part of the one Body, we are called to remember our interconnectedness—in joy and in struggle.

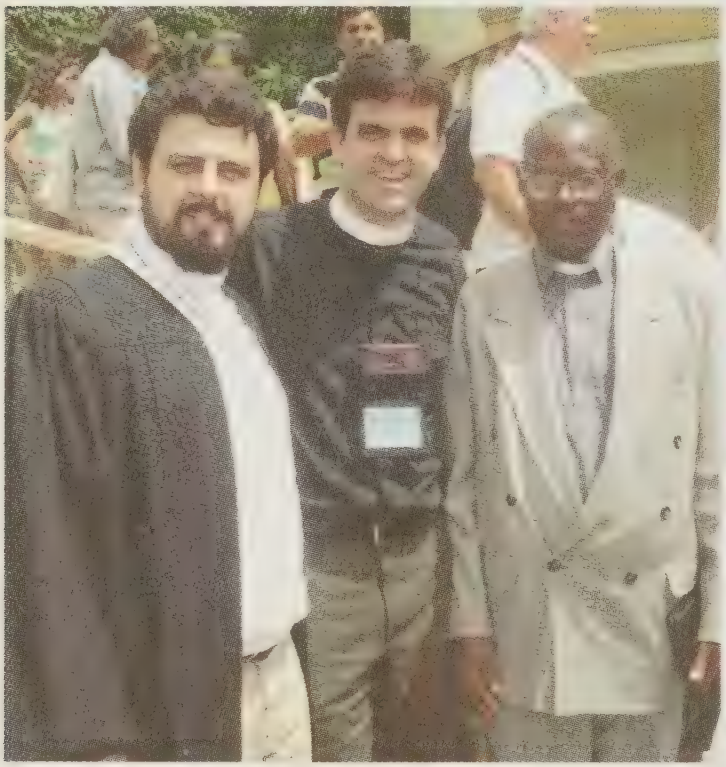
This interconnectedness reminds us that Christian compassion should not have geographical limitations. To put it another way, would we view these challenges differently if those who were suffering were friends sitting in our pews rather than strangers living on the other side of the world? And should that geographical distance make a difference in our care for them?



Three Presbyterians in Brazil: Rev. Andrew Johnston, Rev. Rick Fee and Rev. Will Ingram.



Each day, participants gathered in small Bible study groups to share their diverse perspectives. Will Ingram's group was truly international, from North and South America, Western Europe, the Vatican, South Asia, the Middle East and Africa.





Left: It's a small world after all: Three ministers, from three countries on three continents share common bonds: their faith and their friendship with a Brazilian-born minister working in Toronto. Above: Indigenous Brazilian Christians spread the Word.

The prayer of the assembly—that God would transform the world through grace—is a prayer that requires each one of us to ponder how we might become engaged in these issues, both as individuals and as part of the one Body. After all, our interconnectedness in this increasingly globalized community should invite us to realize that we are, as members of the Church, a part of the single greatest force for goodness, compassion, holiness and justice that this world has ever known. Whether we always live up to that vision—as individuals, as local congregations, as a denomination, or as a world religion—is not the issue, nor does it detract from the potential that continues to exist.

There are challenges that lie before us. But they are challenges that are worth confronting for we know that our common faith calls us, beyond our differences, to a reality so powerful that the gates of death and hell cannot stand against it. We are that community, in this world, that bears witness to the triumph of Christ over the powers of sin, suffering and death.

And so, as we continue our engagement with these issues with Christians from around the world, we are invited to do so in the knowledge that the seemingly overwhelming challenges of this world—the violence, the terrorism, the scourge of AIDS, the demoralizing power of despair and hopelessness, the dehumanizing disparity between rich and poor—do not have the power to change the fact that God's reign has begun. God is already transforming this world—and we are simply invited to participate in that transformation.

As we do, we pray, with Christians from all over the world, God, in your grace, transform the world.

God, in your grace, transform us.

Will Ingram is the minister of Morningside-High Park Church in Toronto and will be serving on the central committee of the WCC for the next seven years.



youth voice

Give me oil in my… flashlight?

It took two cliffs and a moonless night to learn the importance of light | BY ERIN WOODS

Up until last summer, I never understood the Bible's hatred for darkness. Every second passage seemed to be praising God for giving us light, singing songs of hope for morning and proclaiming daytime to be better than night. Why? I thought. I like nighttime. I love to hide in the shadows and wonder what unseen things might be hiding there with me. So what's the deal with these Bible people obsessing over having oil in their lamps?

I spent the month of August last year in the Leader in Training program at a summer camp run by my synod. It was a month full of tests, games and expecting the unexpected. One of the challenges was to spend a night in the woods in shelters we built ourselves. Awesome, I thought. This is my kind of thing.

My partner and I explored the woods around camp and chose a spot where neither of us had been before. We built our fire pit and our shelter and then tramped back to join the rest of the group for supper. Later that night we prepared the things we needed: bedding, food, first aid kit, matches. No, I did not forget to include a flashlight in that list. My partner and I decided to prove how hard core we were and go without one. After all, I was expecting a bit of lingering light to find our shelter and start our fire and then we'd be all set.

It was pitch dark.

OK, I thought, I can deal with this. I remember the route; all we have to do is to feel the edge of the cliff and hug it all the way to our shelter. Good old Canadian Shield; it's so nice for creating landmarks! It's also very nice for creating small cliffs to fall down. Twice. Not wanting my friend to plunge down the rocks as well, I told her to stay with the food while I scouted out the area. I was pretty sure I could find our site. I had fallen down the part that was supposed to be to my right … now go through the blackberries … there should be a stand of maples here …. There should be. It was at this point that I started to gain some respect for the light-obsessors. The ironic thing? I was exactly where I thought I was; only I couldn't see anything. I was standing a few feet from our shelter when I called to say it was unsafe and I was going back to camp to get a flashlight.

Well, we got to our fire pit unscathed in the end and I pulled out our three matches. I struck one. It broke. I struck another. It broke. I took the last one. Even then, it didn't occur to me to pray; I was thinking, morning will come, eventually. I struck the match. It broke.

It wasn't the end of the world. We ate our marshmallows cold and then, quickly, because even our newly acquired flashlight had started dimming, stuffed our sleeping bags into our tiny shelter, then crawled in after them. We lay awake talking for two hours before we fell asleep and I remember feeling profound thankfulness that we didn't have to do anything else but wait for morning … and light.

I still love the darkness, but I know now how different things are when you don't have the option of flicking on a switch

I still love the darkness, but I know now how different things are when you don't have the option of flicking on a switch. It took two cliffs and a moonless night to teach me, but I think I finally understand the lesson in this: In case of darkness, carry a light with you at all times. Either that or don't show off by leaving your flashlight behind when you're camping near a cliff. It's one of the two, I'm sure of it.

Erin Woods worships in North Bay, Ont.

Sending subliminal messages

An Internet hug is better than nothing but it has no patch on the real thing

BY CHARLES FENSHAM

A preacher who concerns himself with how a medium can increase his audience will miss the significant question: In what sense do new media alter what is meant by religion, by church, even by God? – NEIL POSTMAN

One thing the media alters for us as Christians is community. In 1939 the Oxford Dictionary still thought of "connect" as something to do with face-to-face human interaction. Today an Internet dictionary describes it as "a causal or logical relation." Connection is now digitized. This concept of connection at a distance has completely reshaped the way we speak of and understand communication and community.

I recently experienced this firsthand. After having been invited to an event by personal invitation, I received a terse email uninviting me. This difference between the invitation and uninvitation was particularly stark. The invitation was face-to-face, interpersonal and included the nuances of facial expression, greetings and warm communication. The uninvitation was brief, did not convey any emotional content and gave the impression of being the most expedient and effective way of executing the task.

As we move into a world that describes bursts of digital text as communication, we are being shaped in our view of what it is to be human, how to relate to one another and what it is to be community. This affects the way we understand God. Perhaps this is why Eugene Peterson translated John 1:14 as, "The Word became flesh and blood and moved into the neighbourhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son, generous inside and out, true from start to finish." This description of Jesus moving into our neighbourhood, along with his integrity, militates against such ideas as virtual community and digital communication.

There is something about the way we meet in the flesh as Christians to form our communities that expresses the very nature of the God we worship. Of course I am not saying that we should not have computers, use e-mail or watch television, nor am I arguing that we should ban screens and projectors from our worship. I am saying that we need to think carefully what we create and communicate when we use these media. Christian media critic Shane Hipps writes that media often work like the Mr. Subliminal skit from *Saturday Night Live*. In this skit Mr. Subliminal demands one thing while whispering another suggestion. Inevitably the hearer eventually complies with the whispered suggestion. As Christians we too can send subliminal messages that contradict what we say openly through our use of media. Some of these messages are as blatant as how we spend our church budget. Other messages are subtler; for example, the way we are directed to see church as a theatre where we gather to consume a production rather than to meet one another and God through that process. An Internet hug is better than nothing, but it is no patch on the real thing!

How do we respond to these challenges? One way is to keep asking the important questions. How do we follow a Jesus who has moved into our neighbourhood? How does what we believe and experience get lived out and communicated through our congregational communities? What are our blind spots? What are the subliminal messages we are sending out? Let's not be surprised if we find that the ways we have always done it in the past do not stand up well to these questions either.



Charles Fensham is assistant professor of systematic theology at Knox College. This is the second of three articles on technology and the way we worship.

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One got out

The 'most useless game' has much to teach about life and faith

Of all the bad habits I've ever acquired, golf is not the worst. But it's close. I wrote a little golf book lately and I've been surprised at the response. Millions of people golf. And they write me letters about this bad habit. For me, golf is a marvelous and maddening game that combines three favourite pastimes from my childhood: doing poorly at mathematics, taking long walks to get away from people and hitting things with a stick. Not everyone loves golf. John Wayne gave it up out of frustration, I'm told. It's amazing that a man who drew a six-shooter with lightning speed, won the battle of Iwo Jima almost single-handedly and recaptured Bataan could be defeated by a four-inch hole in the ground. But he was. One columnist wrote that golf is "the most useless game ever devised to waste the time and try the spirit of man." Once, after shanking five balls into a murky creek, I tended to agree with him. But mostly I've found the opposite to be true—golf is a useful game that teaches us more about life and faith than we think, if only we will listen.



Paul Steinhauer is a golfing buddy of mine. Almost every time I take a swing I think of my Californian friend. It's impossible not to. Paul gave me my clubs—a gorgeous set that provide great pleasure but leave me few excuses. Paul has given me far more than those clubs, though. The last time we golfed together, we left the scorecard in the clubhouse. A week earlier, Paul and his wife, Judy, laid their only child to rest in a grave on the windswept prairies. At 16 years of age, Janella was the victim of a car crash. Paul just wanted to walk that day. The golf course seemed the ideal place for it. I didn't say much; I just listened.

"I don't know how I can go on," he told me, as he stood over a ball holding a six iron. "Janella would want me to keep going, I guess. To shoot again. Then walk toward the flagstick. You can't play all 18 holes at once." After a dreadful shot, Paul turned to me with a grin. "She would also want me to give you these clubs."

I told him I couldn't take them. He said I had no choice.

"I've never really liked them. I just ordered a better set," he said. And for some reason we stood there laughing in the face of the worst tragedy we'd ever known.

Whenever I reflect on tragedy, I remember the sleepy Sunday afternoon when my son Stephen was five years old. We drove past our town's little golf course, then past the graveyard where Janella would be buried many years later. Noticing a large pile of dirt beside a newly excavated tomb, Stephen pointed and said: "Look, dad! One got out!"

I laughed at his words, but the more I laughed, the more I began to hang onto them. You see, every time I pass a graveyard now, every time I see a cross on a chain, I am reminded of the reason for our joy and hope: One got out! Death could not keep our Saviour in the ground. Jesus Christ, the one exception to all the rules, broke the chains of death, shattered our fears, and promised us eternity with Him.

Most churches in which I am privileged to minister have a cross. Some are carved into the pulpit, some hang on a wall, others are relegated to a foyer. But in Old Greenwich, Connecticut, there is a cross like no other. It is a sturdy three metre wooden cross like a thousand others, but it is bolted into the concrete floor in the centre of the sanctuary. The preacher can't walk in front of the pulpit without stepping over it. The congregation can't listen to him without seeing it. In the same way the cross must be at the centre of our lives. It is the central point of human history, and the central focus of all who embrace the Saviour who hung there one awful day 2,000 years ago. There was nothing good about that Friday. It left 11 disciples in agony. Perhaps they locked themselves away, asking questions none of them could answer.

Until that glorious Sunday when one got out.

Let that thought change the way we live, the way we laugh, and, yes, even the way we golf.

Phil Callaway's new book is *Golfing With The Master*, published by Harvest House.

The Lord will take us up

A mother's love is the most perfect analogy to the love of God

BY DAVID WEBBER



"Mom, stop the truck!" yelled Chelsea.

"I can't stop here, there's no shoulder on this road," said Linda as she clamped on the binders anyway.

"That's good, mom. Now back up about 30 metres."

"I can't back down the wrong side of the road. What happens if another car comes along and smacks into me?"

"Just do it mom, please! There's hardly ever any traffic on this road."

Linda carefully backed up the pickup about 30 metres.

"Look you guys. Over there on the bank next to the road. Do you see them?" said Chelsea.

Our 14-year-old daughter loves all animals, especially babies. Just a few metres away on the bank going up from the road there were three little bears, each about the size of a small beagle dog. Obviously born this spring, one was black the other two were brown. They seemed involved in a combination food foray and fistfight. As we watched, one of the brown cubs pasted the black one in the face and then all three became locked in a ball of mortal combat. They rolled part way down the hill before scampering apart to continue poking around for edible morsels. We sat in the truck enthralled. Chelsea's digital camera was rapping off pictures from the back seat.

"I wonder where the mother is?" said Linda.

"See that real deep ditch between the road and the bank," I said. "Why don't you get out and peek down there? That's where she has got to be. We just can't see her because the ditch is lower than our line of sight. Besides, it's covered with alder brush."

"You trying to retire early on my life insurance?" Linda chuckled, as she rolled

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Four hundred pounds of potentially irked mama bear was enough to keep all of us glued to the seat of the pickup truck

up the truck window. "I feel vulnerable sitting inside a full two tonnes of steel knowing that the cubs are right there in front of us and just a couple of metres away, mama bear is watching us."

Linda was right. We craned every part of our bodies looking to see if we could find even a piece of mama bear but not one of us were offering to venture an inch outside of the pickup truck to further the search. We all knew the female black bear's reputation for fierce attacks whenever her cubs were, in her opinion, in any danger at all. Even though we had spent the better part of the whole day looking for bears to photograph on the scat-splattered road just east of the isolated coastal hamlet of Bella Coola and even though we had a female bear hidden just a couple of metres away begging to be photographed with her three cubs, 400 pounds of potentially irked mama bear was enough to keep all of our fannies glued to the seat of the pickup truck.

Mother's Day is this month. For me this year, the image of the three bears and the three of us held at bay by an unseen mother's passionate care is what is on my mind. It causes me to marvel at our Creator-God who created the instincts of motherhood in the first place. The powerful protective instincts of motherhood are, in my mind at least, a wonderful gift of God for which I give thanks.

For me though it goes much further than that. First published in 1872, Presbyterian theologian Charles Hodge wrote in his *Systematic Theology,* "A mother's love is a mystery and a wonder. It is the most perfect analogue of the love of God." This seems to be the thought expressed by the author of Isaiah (66:13) when he writes about the protection and care of God for the vulnerable returned exiles to Jerusalem: "As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you; you shall be comforted in Jerusalem." If we take seriously this Scripture, and if we take seriously Genesis 1:27 concerning God creating humanity, both male and female, in his image, then I am left to ponder what attribute of God is imaged in the powerful mothering love and care that I see around me. I am left to ponder it and somehow I find myself deeply comforted by it.

God created humanity in His image and ever since humanity has been attempting to return the favour. This is one way I have often thought about the problem of creating God in my own image. It is true that we need to be careful not to do this, for about the same time some of us find great comfort in mothering love as it may apply to God, others of us have parental experiences that are far from perfect. As one woman once said to me as I insisted on referring to God as Our Father, "I can't use that phrase for God. My father physically and sexually abused me all my childhood." I understand what she meant. I should not find much comfort in mothering love as it applies to God since my own mother, whom I was especially close to as a wee child, gave me up when I was five years old.

But the Bible says: "If my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will take me up." (Psalm 27:10) I think that the way this washes out for me is that all the father and mother imagery for God in the Bible is given to us with the expectation we have understood the first three chapters of Genesis. In other words, we are created in God's image and only a small taste of God's character, only a small picture if you like, is deposited in us. Secondly, with the fall of humanity, that image became distorted with sin. It's still there, but often miles away from perfect.

All that being said, I find even more hope in looking at mothering love, care and protection around me and pondering God. If what I see in animal and human terms is but a small imperfect hint of the divine form, now I am totally blown out of the water by it. Happy Mother's Day!

Rev. David Webber is a contributing editor to the *Record*. He is a minister of the Cariboo, B.C. house church ministry. His most recent book is *Like a Winter's Aspen: Embracing the Creator's Fire.*

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ANDERSON, Sara, aged 99, long-time member of First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont.

CHERWINSK, Iva, April 2005. A member for over 50 years of Knox Presbyterian Church, Welland, Ont. Survived by husband Wm. and a large, loving extended family.

FOLEY, Pearl, December 2005. Pearl was an active, faithful member of Knox Presbyterian Church, Welland, Ont., for all of her 51 years of membership. Her love for her God and her service to her church were a witness to us all.

SARGENT, Shirley, aged 89, member of First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont.

WATT, Alex, November 2005. Alex was the last surviving charter member of Knox Presbyterian Church, Welland, Ont. He served his church in various capacities during his 57 years of membership. The vision and discipleship of that founding group now passes to we of the 21st century.

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Gutsy moves push limits to new heights

Presbytery of Barrie continues to grow

BY AMY MACLACHLAN

There is a propensity for forward-thinking and innovative ministers who aren't afraid to push the limits in the Presbytery of Barrie. While remaining Presbyterian, they have embraced the 21st century with contemporary worship, a renewed focus on outreach and evangelism to win people to Christ, and pared-down services that appeal to younger and/or unchurched folk.

At St. Andrew's, Orillia, (est. 1851), the session-appointed future growth team recently released a report to inspire change. Extensive research and reading, church and leadership consultants, congregation and community surveys and personal interviews all helped formulate the report, which has been in the works for nine months. Since January, Rev. Doug Johns has been preaching high-energy, motivational messages "to cultivate a spirit of receptivity and the courage to change." Still, Johns knows not everyone will be receptive.

"I know we have some very nervous people right now. The team talked about everything—we agreed there would be no sacred cows," he said. Unanimously adopted by session in March, the 35-page report will have significant implications on everything from staffing for more effective ministry, to endowment funds, to session structure.

"It has the potential to launch us to new heights," said Johns, who leads a congregation of about 300. "Mainline churches must be willing to take this risk. The status quo does not grow. It takes gutsy leadership to do more than just rearrange the deck chairs on the Titanic."

St. Andrew's revamped its sound system a year ago. In a traditional sanctuary, a state-of-the-art visual presentation system was installed. The cost was about $160,000, which was covered by a donation. "We are a traditional congregation in a traditional building attempting to renew our ministry and mission," said Johns, who encourages others to look at the possibilities for their sanctuaries—even if they are housed in old, steeple-style churches that may not seem conducive to modern additions. "I planned carefully how and when to set this project in motion. It was finished two and a half years after the donor first approached me!"



Students in Gurue, Mozambique, gather in front of their new school building—a very welcome addition made possible by the Mozambique Project at First, Penetanguishene, Ont.

Rev. Carey Nieuwhof knows all about change. He has watched Trinity Community Presbyterian Church in Oro go from three dying congregations into one amalgamated church with about 850 people in attendance each Sunday.

Meeting at first in a school, the congregation moved into its new 18,000-square-foot facility in 2003. The congregation didn't take long to develop a mission, a vision and a heart for reaching and discipling unchurched people. Generation Next was launched in 2004 at Trinity as an effort to equip the wider church to minister in new ways. In its first year, the conference attracted 400 leaders from across Canada for two days of training, worship and inspiration.

Trinty has seen particular growth in the under-40 age group, a conscious target of the leadership team. The church is already full and to make room for more, the congregation recently moved to three Sunday services. A Wednesday evening service is also offered.

"Six years ago, I almost convinced myself that there were not a lot of people of a younger age group in our community," said Nieuwhof, "but with prayerful courage, three years ago, we decided to

target them. And now, our biggest growth is in the 18-30 age group."

The Sunday message at Trinity is tailored less to existing believers and more to the friends of believers who are invited to come along. Worship involves contemporary Christian and mainstream music and the "cultural baggage" of the church is cast aside in favour of communication that is "simple, clear and profound" and presents the truth of God in "a timely, relevant container."

Nieuwhof said people are willing to learn about Jesus, they just need to be approached in ways that are relevant and meaningful to their lives. He noted that many congregations in the presbytery, whether big or small, are in the midst of growth and change, and seeing the fruit of their ministry. "It's encouraging to see that when congregations understand the Biblical challenge and respond in a culturally appropriate way, God does everything He promises He will do. And I have endless excitement for that. It blows me away."

The massive changes happening at Trinity — with worship that some would say is so contemporary it can barely be called Presbyterian — make some church-goers uncomfortable. Others would argue that prodding people out of their comfort zones is exactly what the denomination needs. "The presbytery is in a constant state of change," said Rev. Jim Sitler, presbytery clerk. "And that can be good, challenging and frustrating."

Sitler is minister at Knox, Gravenhurst, and the town's fire department chaplain. The congregation shows its respect for firefighters everywhere with its annual firefighters' service. Local emergency workers gather at Knox to pay tribute to the people who died during the September 11 terrorist attacks.

Sitler noted that some congregations are still coming out of past difficulties (which has fostered a desire to rebuild, refocus and reenergize their mission and vision), and relationships within the presbytery are sometimes strained. There was an appeal to General Assembly last year to resolve a disagreement with a congregation. (It was judged in the presbytery's favour.) "There is definitely the need for healing in some congregations, and cause for celebration in others," he said. "It's a working presbytery."

Although things are far from perfect—intensified by the recent denominational call for presbyteries to contribute more money towards new church development and redevelopment—there are reasons for hope. The presbytery's location is situated in one of the fastest-growing areas in Canada. "So we're in the potential position to reach out into an ever-expanding community," said Sitler, who has been a member of presbytery for 15 years. "We represent larger cities like Barrie with 100,000 people to very small rural towns and everything in between. We have a good variety of leadership styles. We're one of the largest presbyteries in the denomination, and we reflect that."

Knox, Midland, which began as a mission station in 1874, is in the midst of affecting change. The congregation's mantra of "Dress is whatever. Music is today," points to Midland's commitment to offering an approachable, welcoming, simple environment for people uneasy about going to church. Knox' seven-year plan sets goals and guidelines for creating effective outreach to the unchurched in Southern Georgian Bay, and moving to a new facility if needed.

'Six years ago, I almost convinced myself that there were not a lot of people of a younger age group in our community. But with prayerful courage, three years ago, we decided to target them. And now, our biggest growth is in the 18-30 age group'

The plan outlines annual themes—all of which are designed to reach out to and attract newcomers and will be used for preaching, study and publicity. This year's theme (the first in the series) is "Let there be light." Goals over the seven years include focusing on outreach to people without a church home, a campaign of awareness of the needs around the church, transformation of the church building, developing a compelling Internet presence, financial empowerment, new developments for evangelism, worship, nurture and service, and an annual assessment.

The quest to bring the church into the 21st century continues at St. Marks, Orillia, (est. 1957) where the congregation has set three major objectives: to double attendance through strong ministry to younger families and children, to encourage and help the people of St. Mark's have a greater spiritual awareness in every aspect of their lives, and to increase the congregation's ability to effectively share the gospel with people who are not associated with a church.

The congregation addresses community concerns relating to poverty, teenage pregnancy and unemployment, and raises money for its outreach projects through silent auctions, yard sales, suppers and personal donations. One particularly successful initiative was the Presbyterian Potato Project, an activity involving the entire congregation in the growing, harvesting and selling of potatoes and other vegetables. Stands were maintained at local farmer's markets throughout the summer, and some of the produce was donated to local food banks and shelters.

The Presbytery of Barrie dates back to the very first General Assembly of the PCC in June 1875. The first presbytery meeting was held the next month, and the complete presbytery minutes since that time are housed in the archives at the national office. The presbytery's 32 charges and 41 congregations make it one of the largest in the church. Nine pulpits are vacant, although there are 20 congregations with membership over 100 and 11 with more than 100 in attendance each Sunday. Between 2003 and 2004, membership, adherents and attendance increased significantly.

As several congregations look for ways to make dramatic changes, many others are taking smaller steps, but still with the aim of reaching out to the people around them. At First, Collingwood, where the congregation celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2005, several projects serve aging members of the church and the community. The pastoral care team visits nursing homes, a telecare program ensures people are phoned between visits, the outreach

singers take their music ministry to retirement communities, and the Let's Do Lunch program offers a monthly luncheon for seniors complete with musical entertainment.

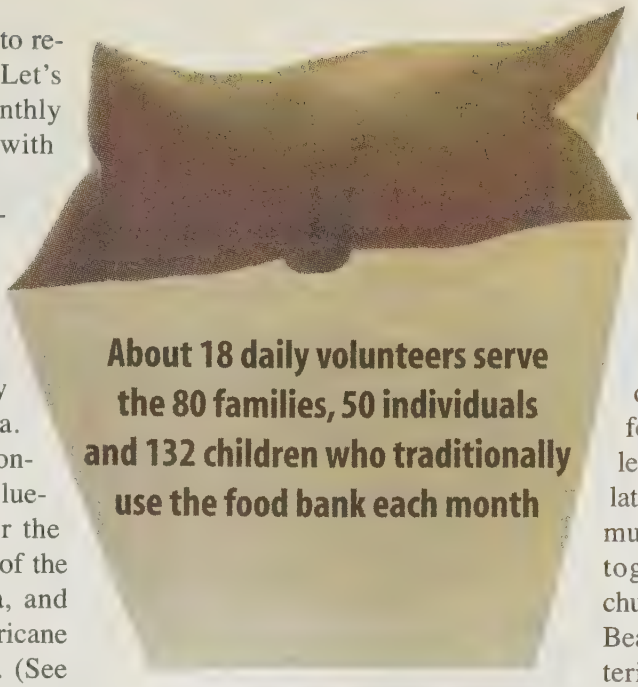
Ivy Presbyterian in New Tecumseth will be taking its mission south when 26 people travel to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in August. They will help rebuild several houses that were severely damaged by Hurricane Katrina. The congregation is hosting a concert in June called the Katrina Bluegrass Benefit to raise money for the trip. The event will feature some of the best bluegrass bands in Canada, and will kick off a focus to help hurricane survivors for the next few years. (See News for more details.)

Knox, Bracebridge, (which marked its 130th anniversary last year by raising $7,800 to dig a well in Malawi) has several projects on the go. It offers a weekly Wednesday family night, where families gather for a potluck dinner. Afterwards they break according to age groups—children, teens and adults—for Bible study and worship. Rev. Michael Barnes leads the adults. In operation for four years, about 30 people (and sometimes as many as 50) between the ages of 10 months and 75 years participate.

Intergenerational activities such as this are important at Knox. Their chancel drama group has been going for four years, producing 21 plays involving 77 people between the ages of five and 80. The congregation also honoured the Year of the Veteran with a production of World War I and II songs. The choir sang more than 25 songs in the play set in a military canteen with a love story weaving throughout. The event raised more than $2,000 for PWS&D's AIDS projects.

At First, Penetanguishene, the congregation is heavily involved in a partnership with a school in Africa. Their Mozambique Project paid for a new building, along with supplies and teachers' salary at the Chabwe primary school in Gurue. One teacher used to teach all 70 students. Today, there are 100 kids attending, and a second teacher has been hired.

"It is so important to our congregation to know that they can and do make a difference," said Mary Sheriff, chair of the missions team. "We are delighted to know that as we search for a new minister, we have the prayers of our Mozambique friends. It is indeed a small world as we sit in the caring hands of our mutual Father."



About 18 daily volunteers serve the 80 families, 50 individuals and 132 children who traditionally use the food bank each month

Reaching out is a priority at St. Andrew's, Coldwater. One of its most recent initiatives is a water campaign—a focus adopted by last year's General Assembly. The Enough for All campaign promotes clean, abundant water as a basic human right and works to ensure access for all. The Sunday school's Advent project involved handing out bottled water to the congregation along with "action cards" to be signed and sent to the federal government. The youth group is also supporting the campaign and is helping to educate the congregation about the denomination's involvement. A wake-a-thon raised additional funds for this mission.

St. Andrew's, Barrie, (est. 1849), is actively involved in Taizé prayer services as an alternative form of worship—something that came to the Barrie area two years ago and now involves several denominations. The first service was hosted by St. Andrew's. Since then, six other churches, including Westminster, Barrie, have joined to host Taizé prayer services on the last Friday of each month.

Attendance varies, but there are generally 40 to 80 people at any given service. "Quiet prayer and meditation can help people overwhelmed by the complexities of life to reconnect to their faith in God," said Susan Stott-Hood, an elder at St. Andrew's. "Taizé offers a peaceful philosophy that is worth investigating."

Wasaga Beach Community Presbyterian is using its gifts to serve an ecumenical community-wide endeavour. Five months ago, the local food bank and thrift store was closed, leaving the town's less-fortunate population without a valuable service. Community members immediately rallied together, and since February, eight churches have been hosting the Wasaga Beach Ministerial Food Bank as an interim solution. "We needed to ensure those who needed to be fed would be fed. It was clearly our responsibility, our call," said Rev. Julia Morden.

The three-month interim plan included opening the food bank two days a week and one evening, and remaining in the same location. "We set a bare bones budget and I started the work for acceptance by the Ontario Association of Food Banks," said Morden. (Becoming a member of the association ensures start-up food donations from them.) "There have been a number of volunteers, and all have been a blessing."

About 18 daily volunteers serve the 80 families, 50 individuals and 132 children who traditionally use the food bank each month. Long-term plans, including moving to a new location, are already in the works. There are dreams of a community kitchen, a coffee corner, a meditation centre, counselling rooms and job placement boards.

"The most wonderful thing is that we are working together," said Morden. "Each week the needs list goes out to the churches and each week we have been blessed with the responses. Because the churches are working together, the town has given the new food bank $5,000 toward expenses, and the service clubs and businesses have been supportive in a variety of ways.

"We only just started but the amazing feeling of the churches working together to help those in need is right. It is our calling. One only needs to read the Gospel to hear and understand that."

called to wonder

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Mark the path through the flock to find Psalm 23. Start at the shepherd and use a pencil to move from the first sheep (THE) to the next sheep (LORD).

Solution on page 29.



To report a vacancy for the next issue of the Record please contact: Deborah Leader
Tel: 1-800-619-7301 x308 Fax: 416.441.2825 E-mail: dleader@presbyterian.ca
All notices of pulpit vacancies will be charged to the congregation: $8 a line, $40 minimum for a one-time insertion or $25 per insertion for four or more insertions.

Ministry Opportunities and Interim Moderators

New Church Development positions available through Canada Ministries; Contact Rev. Gordon Haynes, Associate Secretary; 416-441-1111 extension 258 for more details.

Synod of the Atlantic Provinces

St. John's; St. David's; Interim Moderator David Sutherland, 98 Elizabeth Ave., St. John's, NL A1B 1R8; dsutherland@nf.sympatico.ca.

Sunny Corner Pastoral Charge, N.B.: St. Stephen's, Sunny Corner, St. Paul's, Warwick; Rev. H. Martyn Van Essen, 7 Hierlihy Rd., Tabusintac, NB E9H 1Y5; 506-779-1812; hmvanessen@hotmail.com.

Tatamagouche Pastoral Charge, N.S.: Sedgwick Memorial, Tatamagouche, St. Matthew's, Wallace and St. John's, Pugwash; Interim-moderator Richard E. Sand, 37 Mountain Rd., New Glasgow, N.S. B2H 3K7; acersand@ns.sympatico.ca.

Thorburn and Sutherland's River, N.S.; Union; Interim Moderator Rev. E. M. Iona MacLean, PO Box 1003, Pictou, NS B0K 1H0; ionamac@eastlink.ca.

Woodstock, N.B., St. Paul's New Interim Moderator Rev. Robert Adams, 1991 Hwy. 640, Hanwell, NB E3C 1Z5

Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario

Brockville, Ont.; First Presbyterian Church; Rev. Geoff Howard, Interim Moderator, 38 Elizabeth Dr., PO Box 440, Iroquois, ON K0E 1K0; 613-652-6215; gl.howard@sympatico.ca.

Howick, Georgetown, Que.; 1/2 time; Rev. Dr. Barry Mack, 496 Birch Ave., Saint-Lambert, QC J4P 2M8; 450-671-1862; standrews@standrews-stlambert.ca.

Inverness, Que., co-operative with the United Church, 3-point charge; a 3/4 time position and knowledge of French would be an asset; Rev. J. B. Forsyth, 585 Principale sud, Waterville, QC J0B 3H0; 819-837-1475; jbfor@netrevolution.com.

Montreal, Chinese; Rev. J.S.S. Armour, 101 Creswell Dr., Beaconsfield, QC H9W 1E1; 514-426-4688; jss@magma.ca.

Montreal, Taiwanese Robert Campbell Memorial; Rev. Dr. Bill Klempa, 155 Lac Louisa Rd. N., Wentworth, QC J8H 3W8; 450-533-5321; wklemp@po-box.mcgill.ca.

Montreal, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Pierrefonds; Dr. J. Vissers, 3495 University St., Montreal, QC H3A 2A8; 514-288-5256 extension 201; jvissers@presbyteriancollege.ca.

Ottawa, St. Giles; Rev. Andrew Johnston, Interim Moderator; St. Andrew's, 82 Kent St., Ottawa, ON K1P 5N9; 613-232-9042; aj@standrewsottawa.ca.

Pincourt, Que., Ile Perrot; David Morris, Convener, Search Committee, 242 Fifth Ave., Pincourt, QC J7V 5L3; 514-453-4378; dafydd.rich@sympatico.ca.

Vankleek Hill, Knox; Hawkesbury, St. Paul's, Ont.; Rev. Ian MacMillan, RR 2, Cornwall, ON K6H 5R6; 613-931-2545; a3100@glen-net.ca.

Synod of Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda

Beeton, St. Andrew's; Rev. Jim Young, PO Box 312, Sutton, ON L0E 1R0; 905-722-3544; standrew@ils.net.

Belleville, St. Columba; Rev. Katherine McCloskey, PO Box 118, Stirling, ON K0K 3E0; 613-395-5006; katherinejonah@hotmail.com.

Dunedin, Knox; Half-time position; Rev. Robert Graham, Interim Moderator; 160 King St. South, Alliston, ON L9R 1B9; 705-435-5081; robert.graham1@sympatico.ca.

Georgetown, Knox and Limehouse, Limehouse; Interim Moderator The Rev. Wes Denyer, 44 Church St. E., Brampton, ON L6V 1G3; 905-451-1723; wesdenyer@rogers.com.

Milton, Knox; Rev. Harry Klassen, 3065 Cawthra Rd., Mississauga, ON L5A 2X4; dixiepc@bellnet.ca.

Oshawa, St. Luke's; Rev. Dennis Cook, 97 Burcher Rd., Ajax, ON L1S 2R3; revdjcook@hotmail.com.

Penetanguishene, First; Rev. Peter Ruddell, Box A-180, RR 1, Coldwater, ON L0K 1E0; 705-686-3125; p_d.ruddell@sympatico.ca.

Picton, St. Andrew's; Full-time minister; Interim Moderator Zander Dunn, Stella, ON K0H 2S0; 613-634-0465; zndunn@sympatico.ca.

Stayner, Jubilee; Sunnidale Corners, Zion; Rev. Keith Boyer; 27 Laurie Cres., Barrie, ON L4M 6C7; 705-735-9211; keb-cvb@sympatico.ca.

Thornhill, Thornhill Presbyterian; Rev. Barry Van Dusen, PO Box 264, Nobleton, ON L0G 1N0; 905-859-0843; barry.peggy.vandusen@sympatico.ca.

Toronto, Bridlewood; Rev. Graeme Illman, 765 Myrtle Rd. W., Ashburn, ON L0B 1A0; 905-655-8509; InterimModerator@bridlewoodpc.ca.

Toronto, Faith Community; Half time; Rev. Dr. Jim Czegledi, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, ON M3C 1J7; jczegledi@presbyterian.ca.

Toronto, Guildwood Community; Rev. J. P. Ian Morrison, 17 Earswick Dr., Scarborough, ON M1E 1C7; 416-265-0135; ian.morrison@sympatico.ca.

Toronto, Patterson; Rev. Zoltan Vass, 439 Vaughan Rd, Toronto, ON M6C 2P1; 416-656-1342.

Toronto, St. Andrew's, Humber Heights; Rev. Garth Wilson, 155 Wychwood Ave., Toronto, ON M6C 2T1.

Toronto, St. Timothy's; Associate minister for English Service; Dr. Calvin Kim, B2-78 Finch Ave. E., North York, ON M2N 7J5; Telephone: 416-229-0599; Fax (during business hours): 416-229-0594; sttimprez@yahoo.com.

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For more information:
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To submit resumes, or for any inquiries, contact us at:

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Trenton, St. Andrew's; Rev. Job van Hartingsveldt, 244 McMahon Ave., Kingston, ON K7M 3H2; 613-542-5579; strapark@kos.net.
Uxbridge, St. Andrew's-Chalmers; Rev. Duncan Cameron; 115 St. Andrews Rd, Scarborough, ON M1P 4N2; 416-438-4370; scarboroughpc@allstream.net.
Warkworth, St. Andrew's; Hastings, St. Andrew's; Rev. Rylan Montgomery, PO Box 328, Colborne, ON K0K 1S0; 613-475-4675; rylan.montgomery@gmail.ca.
Waterloo, Waterloo North; Rev. Calvin Brown; 5 Linda Dr., Cambridge, ON N3C 3W5; 519-651-2232; cbbrown@rogers.com.

Synod of Southwestern Ontario
Chesley, Geneva Church; Rev. Dr. Alex McCombie, RR 3, Chesley, ON N0G 1L0; Phone: 519-363-5392; Fax: 519-363-0975
Cromarty, Cromarty Presbyterian Church & Hibbert United Church (an ecumenical two-point charge); Interim Moderator Rev. Gwen Brown, PO Box 2418, Exeter, ON N0M 1S7; 519-235-3701; kintail@tcc.on.ca.
Embro, Knox; Harrington, Knox; Interim Moderator, Rev. Chris Little, PO Box 99, Innerkip, ON N0J 1M0; 519-469-3904; innpresb@execulink.com.
Hamilton, Central; Full-time minister; The Rev. Harry J. Bradley, Interim Moderator, 165 Charlton Ave. W., Hamilton, ON L8P 2C8; 905-549-8053; hjbradley@mountaincable.net.
Hamilton, Chalmers; Robert Geddes, South Gate Presbyterian Church, 120 Clarendon Ave., Hamilton, ON L9A 3A5; 905-385-7444; bobgeddes@mountaincable.net.
Hamilton, St. John & St. Andrew; Hamilton, St. David's; Rev. Clive W. Simpson, 19 Tisdale St. N., Hamilton, ON L8L 8A7; 905-709-6004; clive.simpson@sympatico.ca.
London, Dayspring; Half-time; Rev. Gloria Langlois, 225 College St., Belmont, ON N0L 1B0; 519-644-1765; glorialanglois@rogers.com.
Niagara Falls, Drummond Hill Presbyterian Church; Interim Moderator Rev. Dr. Doug Robinson, 24 Clairmont St., Thorold, ON L2V 1R3; 905-227-4844 or 905-227-9450; robinson@vaxxine.com.
Port Elgin, Tolmie Presbyterian Church and Burgoyne, Knox; Rev. Bill Vanderstelt, PO Box 280, Chatsworth, ON N0H 1G0; 519-794-0155; bvanderstelt@hotmail.com.
Windsor, Chinese Church; Half-time, Cantonese-speaking; Wendy Paterson, 3200 Woodland, Windsor, ON N9E 1Z5; 519-972-3627; paulinmemorial@on.aibn.com.
Windsor, St. Andrew's; Full-time minister; The Rev. Scott McAndless, Interim Moderator, c/o Knox Presbyterian Church, 58 Erie St. South, Leamington, ON N8H 3B1; 519-326-4541; scottmcandless@sympatico.ca.
Woodstock, Knox; Full-time Associate Minister; Rev. Mark Gaskin, 97 Wellington St., Brantford, ON N3T 2M1; 519-752-4932; Fax 519-752-1846; cpc97@execulink.com.

Synod of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario
Winnipeg, St. James'; Rev. Amy Campbell, 299 Olive St., Winnipeg, MB R3J 2X5; 204-831-5561; amethyst@mts.net.

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Sunday May 14, 2006
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Synod of Saskatchewan

Saskatoon, Circle West; Parkview; Rev. Annabelle Wallace, 436 Spadina Cres. E, Saskatoon, SK S7K 3G6; 306-242-0525; standrews@sasktel.net.

Synod of Alberta and the Northwest

Calgary, St. Andrew's; Associate Minister; Interim Moderator Rev. Ian Gray, Westminster Presbyterian Church, 290 Edgepark Bvld. N.W., Calgary, AB T3A 4H4; 403-241-1443; minister@wpchurch.net.

Edmonton, Strathcona Presbyterian Church, http://www.spchurch.ca; Interim Moderator Rev. Keith Humphrey, 8715 118 Ave., Edmonton, AB T5B 0T2; 780-477-8677; rvkrby@shaw.ca.

Lethbridge, Alta., St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church; Interim Moderator Rev. Frank Breisch, 1818 5th Ave. S., Lethbridge, AB T1J 0W6; andrewst@telusplanet.net.

Synod of British Columbia

Comox, Comox Valley Presbyterian Church; Interim Moderator Rev. Elizabeth Forrester, 2408 Glenayr Dr., Nanaimo, BC V9S 3R7; 250-751-1544; eamfor@telus.net.

Slocan Valley, St. Andrew's; Interim Moderator Rev. Dr. Leo E. Hughes; 250-226-7540; margrevleo@netidea.com.

Victoria, Chinese (bilingual, English/Cantonese); Rev. H. McNabb, 760 Latoria Rd., Victoria, BC V9C 3A4; hamcnabb@shaw.ca.

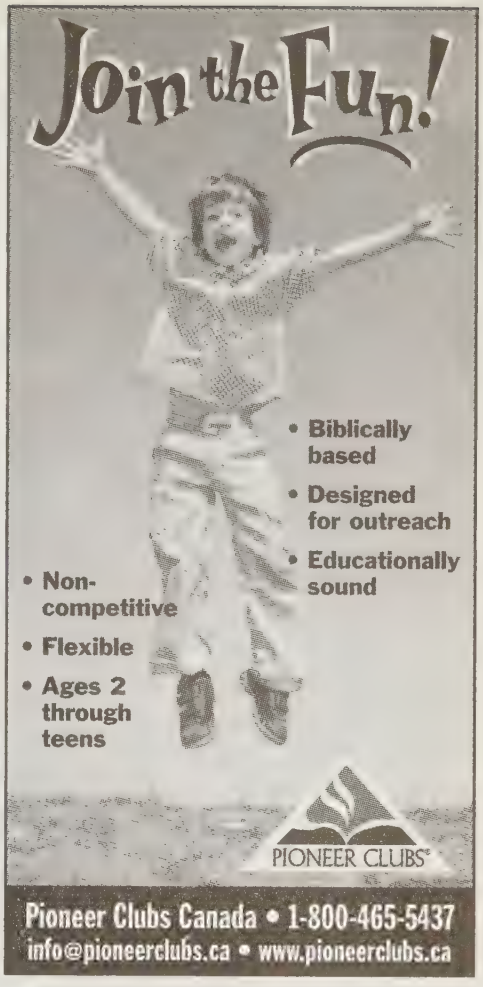
For details about the Summer Services Listing appearing in the June and July/August issues of the Record, contact:

Carol McCormick
Tel: 905.833.6200 ext. 25
Fax: 905.833.2116
E-mail: cmccormick@canadads.com

June issue – by April 15th;
for July/August issue – by May 15th

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We strive to connect people of all generations
through God's love
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We welcome all to gather in Christian fellowship

First Presbyterian Church
Brockville, Ontario



Jean Morris



In praise for women elders

We must ensure that gender is never used as a barrier to ministry

The last few days I have been subtly but powerfully reminded of the wisdom of our church in its decision to ordain women. This year marks the 40th anniversary of General Assembly acceding to the ordination of women within The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Recently, I have been in the presence of women teaching and ruling elders, in diverse contexts of ministry, across the regions of our country and have been very thankful for their gifts.



The Moderator in Montreal with some of the women of the presbytery: Rev. Lynne Donovan, Rev. Glynis Williams, Rev. Jean Morris, Rev. Kate Jordan, Huda Kandalaft and Rev. Hye-Sook Kam.

Throughout my life, I have been mentored, nurtured, and challenged by ordained women—some Presbyterian, some not. In the first congregation in which I was called to serve the majority of session members and ministers in the community were women. The ruling elder who regularly contacts and visits our home is a woman. She provides us with the consistent assurance of the support and prayers of our local congregation as a reminder to me of the strength of pastoral ministry by elders across the church. The first woman to be ordained ruling elder within the Presbyterian church was Joan McInnis. (Shirley Jeffery was first to be ordained as teaching elder two years later.) Forty years later, the church's ministry continues to be blessed by many women who have answered Christ's call to eldership.

It was my privilege one Sunday to lead worship with Rev. Iona MacLean, minister of First, Pictou, Nova Scotia, on the occasion of the congregation's 220th anniversary. Iona was the first woman to be ordained in the Synod of Atlantic Provinces, in 1977. From Pictou I went to Halifax and then to Montreal and in both those centres I encountered women ministering in a variety of contexts, reflecting the wonderful breadth and scope of Presbyterian ministries in Canada. Over the last four decades, women have joined men in providing leadership in chaplaincies, theological education, interim-ministries, camps, congregations, native ministries, faith-based organizations, national staff, refugee work, street ministries and other areas. I have seen the faithfulness of these ministries with new eyes this year and am thankful for the creative ways that the church continues to engage and encourage gifted women and men in these relevant and life-giving ministries. There are many rooms in the household of God and many rooms of different ministries within the household of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The diversity of women's gifts for ministry has contributed to the breadth and depth of our witness in the world over the last 40 years and in the process has transformed who we are.

There are still some presbyteries, and other spheres of our church life, which have not yet benefited fully from the gifts of women called to ministry. Certain of the call of Christ to both women and men for leadership in all areas of the church's work, we must ensure that gender is never used as a barrier for ministry. Those days are supposed to be long gone—for 40 years, in fact.

We give thanks to God for the gifts of ordained women within our church. In particular, we give thanks for those who led the way years ago and got the door opened—even a crack. From their vision, we now see wide-open possibilities, and doors opened to many rooms of serving Christ in the church and in the world, to the glory of God.



MODERATOR'S ITINERARY

May	
3	WMS, Crieff Hills
6 – 7	St. Andrew's, Cobourg, Ont. 173rd anniversary
10	Knox College, Toronto convocation
11	Presbyterian College, Montreal convocation
28	Caledonia, Caledonia, Ont. 160th anniversary

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2) A great place to spend your summer!

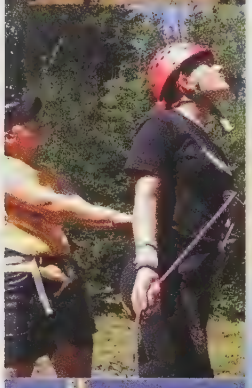
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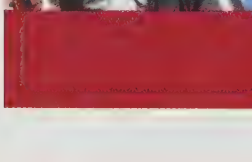
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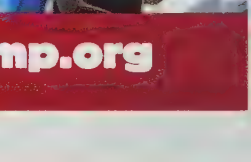






cairn - *come and leave your mark.*





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David Harris



Da Vinci's hidden truth decoded

Stories are the heartbeat of human civilization. Philosophy, politics and economics may define an age academically, but our heart and soul go to Hector, Hamlet, Madame Bovary and Anna Karenina. • So too, the most popular parts of the Bible are the stories of Moses and Joshua, the Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan, whose tales of plagues and crumbling walls, of sin and redemption move us in ways far beyond the complexities of Pauline theology, however important it may be.

So what are the hidden truths beating in the old fiction of the Gospel of Judas or the new fiction of *The Da Vinci Code*? Because *The Da Vinci Code* is obviously not wildly popular on account of its second-rate plot. Cheap thrillers are still a dime a dozen—well, maybe a twooney.

Yet Dan Brown has clearly struck a chord that resonates with many, even if its jangle jars critics' ears.

Da Vinci succeeds not because of some contemporary gaping gullibility but because it speaks to the post-modern heart that has experienced institutions as unreliable and self-perpetuating.

The book's underlying thesis is that one should be suspicious of institutions, since they have their own agenda and hide the truth. (Denominational distinctions blur for non-Christians for whom the pope is the only identifiable world religious leader.)

Da Vinci is about the church's handling of its internal affairs, which has been less than transparent throughout the centuries, the most recent being the revelations of devastating child abuse and subsequent attempts at cover-ups.

The result is a lack of trust in how the institution interprets scripture. Jesus and his message are popular; the church is mistrusted.

The other truth *Da Vinci* speaks to is the relentless effort of Christian institutions over the centuries to diminish the role and power of women. And the more church leaders protest this, the more people think the church foolish or irrelevant.

To be clear, as an even reasonably historically accurate document, *Da Vinci* is a failure. Brian Grazer, producer of the movie, said in an interview: "We don't feel it's factual, it's not historic, but it's informed fiction." He should have stopped at the comma—or stuck with the *Da Vinci* book's imprint page disclaimer: "All of the characters in this book are fictitious, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental."

But as a sociologically revelatory document that captures the heartbeat of a society in story? There *Da Vinci*'s popularity shows how accurately it hits the mark.

Perhaps the fact that it is no polished work of literature also speaks to a present day demand for access and relevance—egalitarianism trumps eloquence.

The response to Brown's litany of factual errors (if one doesn't believe the disclaimer just mentioned) reveals another point, which is how bloodless much Christian interpretation of the Bible is.

Just as Shakespeare's *Henry V* is not a lesson in history but of human spirit, the Bible is not a collection of history essays about king this and prophet that. It is about the self-revelation of the living God in the lives of the writers and their ancestors in express hope and belief that this God would continue a living relationship with these people.

Scripture itself is an incarnation of the word of God. It is holy precisely because it mediates the divine energies to those who hear the words with meaning that transcends the mundane.

Christians who try to "correct" all the errors on the surface of scripture or tout "facts" that are unreferenced outside scripture make the same mistake as those scholars who cast lots to determine what Jesus "really" said. Both groups eviscerate the heart of the matter, leaving a lifeless midden of factoids.

The early Christian community was well aware of the Gnostic texts (including the Gospel of Judas). Their rejection of them depended not only on refuting errors in fact, but on discerning the overall pulse of the message, and Gnosticism was ultimately out of sync with the true Gospel.

The Bible is the story of humanity's heart beating in and out of sync with God's. If Christians are to help society hear God's heartbeat, we need also to listen for the rhythm in *Da Vinci* and Judas so we know when the beats are together and when not.

David Harris

letters

Free speech without sanctimony

I am very pleased with the *Record*, and find it amazing that my congregation dropped the Every Home Plan except that money appears more important than do education and connection to the larger church.

One columnist, however, often rankles me, writing material that ridicules those liberals—who all are presumably against Christianity. Michael Coren appears to believe that he is part of the enlightened Christian Right that can coolly, confidentally and logically put liberals in their place.

The problem with such approaches is that labels handily divide people, while leaving the truth languishing. The fact is Jesus is quoted by both the Christian Right and many liberals (Christian and other).

In April, Coren accused liberals of being against the church while worshipping "nationalism, public broadcasting and education and socialized medicine." Seems strange, then, to see him praise the "Father of Medicare," Rev. Tommy Douglas.

Like Coren, I am glad that we live in a country where we can freely voice our opinions. It is therefore understandable (though unhelpful) that those he targets sanctimoniously would reply with such venom.

Christianity can be both passionate and respectful.

Ian Gartshore
Nanaimo, B.C.

Real thing's a killer

Re Pop Christianity, January. I would suggest that your example is a poor one. Visit Iqaluit, Nunavut, and see the toothless gaping mouths. The Iqaluit Coca-Cola plant produces 4,000 two-litre bottles and 20,000 smaller bottles daily. In addition, more is flown in or brought in by barge.

The population of Iqaluit is only 6,000 and in the rest of the territory not appreciably more.

Jean Janes
Watford, Ont.

Serious service deserves consideration

Re People and Places editor letter, December 2005. Cute? No. Serious? Yes. Our submission regarding 50 years of dedicated service, working with nine ministers, countless interim ministers and supply ministers through a ministry of music, was subjected to your lottery arbitrarily.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is made up of lay people. Could the *Record* please remember that when arbitrarily choosing items and devote its pages to things important.

Hilde G. Morden
Rodney, Ont.

Testimony

The January article by David Webber, Unexpected, Out of Place, Persistent, describes how I think and about as close as to how I pray, as possible—like a perfect match! That *Record* is a keeper, but then I've kept every issue for many years.

I was raised attending the Baptist and United churches of Fenelon Falls, Ont., because these were the Protestant denominations of my parents and ne'er did the twain meet. It did mean that being the oldest, I was expected to attend Sunday school at both churches plus a morning and evening service. My younger siblings weren't required to follow suit.

Eventually I married a Presbyterian. There was no possibility that my husband would change his church stripes, even though he wasn't keen on church attendance. I sensed that church must remain an important part of our lives and with gritted teeth, submitted to becoming part of "the dry old Presbyterian Church" (my opinion) in Fenelon Falls.

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They loved me, appreciating my participation there.

I began to chip away at the prevailing habits of our church, becoming an elder and eventually clerk of session. It was wonderful to work in presbytery, WMS, etc. I wasn't alone in my vision for the church, but we were a minority. Eventually, a time came when I realized that with all of my other responsibilities, I could no longer continue to fight my way upstream—neither could I live with the status quo. We began attending another Presbyterian church. After a few months of assessment, I decided to serve in any capacity where help was needed. I did this quite happily, wanting to be as servant (rather than a servant leader), if this was God's plan.

Life has changed. My husband was diagnosed with incurable cancer in 2004. We sold our home and moved to Bancroft, Ont., in 2005. We did not move to the Arctic as some people imagined, but to the place of God's intention. After five years of praying to this effect, we didn't consider the what if's. We don't know why He engineered this move, but we'll find out.

There are no Presbyterian churches anywhere in the vicinity, but we're experiencing the culture shock of visiting a variety of churches in the area, trusting that we'll settle in the church of God's choice, regardless of denomination.

Marcia Whyte
Bancroft, Ont.

Brewing fellowship

I certainly enjoyed participating in your fair trade coffee contest and am very pleased with my third-place win. Many in our congregation were supportive of my office coffee initiative, and we will be using the awarded coffee at an upcoming Sunday fellowship hour, so even more people can enjoy some fair trade coffee.

Lorraine Swaile
Richmond Presbyterian Church
Richmond, B.C.

Curse of the black gold

It was good to see David Harris' March editorial addressing the environmental implications of rapid Alberta oil sands exploitation for export to energy-hungry countries around the world. He noted the economic benefits for Canada but commented that there is just one problem—global warming.

Other problems associated with the current stampede include: chemical contamination of soil, air and water; an overheated economy drawing into the province large numbers of people dependent on a temporary resource; rampant materialism and social stratification; and the prospect that within a few decades our descendants will be left with a devastated environment and without access to convenient petroleum-based fuels for heating and transport. Even now, with Alberta still sitting on large reserves of natural gas, less affluent citizens are being impoverished or driven out of their homes by soaring prices of gas for home heating in a severe climate. Those prices are essentially being determined by external demands not only for heating but perhaps even more for air-conditioning, which has facilitated the transfer of industry from the northern states to the cheap labour south and which is another factor in global warming.

The current Alberta energy boom may be a bonanza for many, but for others it is worse than nothing. It has been said that oil in the ground is like King Midas's gold—a curse to those who have it. This dictum certainly seems applicable to many parts of the world. Will it be true of Alberta also?

Charles R. Neill
Edmonton

Back in the family

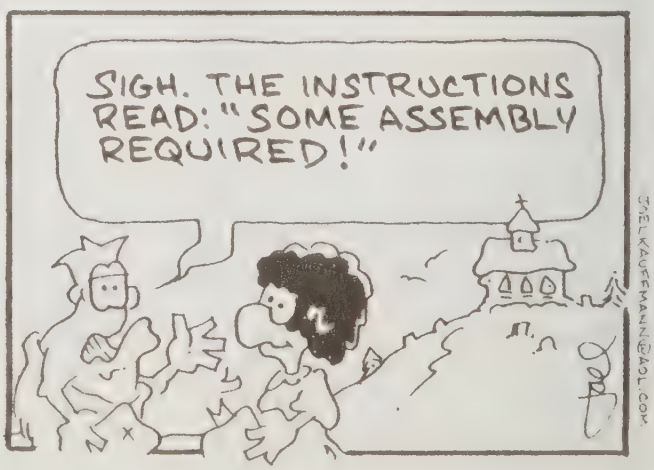
Amy MacLachlan recently wrote an article on St. George's Presbyterian Church and our involvement with the AIDS Committee of London. She was prompt in returning emails, listened carefully when conducting interviews and was most professional in her research.

So many people have already responded however with a sense of deep gratitude for being included in the April edition. St. George's opted out of the Every Home Plan some time ago. Then the issue was reviewed in 2005 and we are again members. The quick response to the article about St. George's shows us that people are really reading the *Record* and appreciating it. It is good to be back "in the family again."

We hosted Mark Simmons who has

Pontius' Puddle





been in Ghana with Canadian Crossroads International and the AIDS Committee of London. I was so happy to have the April edition to show him and Peter Hayes, the executive director of ACOL. Peter scanned through the magazine and commented favourably on the way the *Record* gives good coverage to the work of PWS&D. And as a former parish priest, he was also interested in the church's focus on ministry with the aged.

The April edition is certainly one to be read cover to cover. Amy is to be commended along with the rest of the staff at the *Record*.

Rev. Keith McKee
London, Ont.

Adam and Eve

Re Planning for a Marriage, Not Just a Wedding.

I wish marriage courses and updates were more readily available. However, step five refers to the roles for "man and wife." The correct phrase is man and woman or husband and wife.

Wendy Renault
Hamilton, Ont.

A letter from above

Surely Dorothy Nekrasoff's *Noting the Need* in April is her most amazing letter. Especially the penultimate sentence, "But then I am free to write people we are praying for."

Enid Pottinger
Hamilton, Ont.

Editor's note: Dorothy Nekrasoff, who wrote about her letter-writing campaign, died Jan. 16, 2006.

Appreciating caregivers

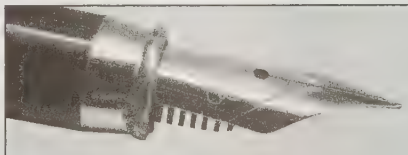
I was pleased to read Lisa Petsche's April article Blessed are the Caregivers. As someone privileged to work full time with (unpaid) family caregivers in communities across Newfoundland and Labrador, I am struck by two things: (1) the need for us to recognize the caregiver's essential role in supporting their family members, spouses and friends and (2) the tremendous difference people in the community can make in caregivers' lives, with relatively small offers of help.

We hope that one of the main supporters of this year's provincial Caregiver Week in October will be the strong church community in the province.

Erin Holland
Caregivers Out of Isolation Program
St. John's, Nfld.

Correction

In March we reported that the Jane-Finch neighbourhood had 70 nationalities speaking 115 languages. The figures, both approximate, should be reversed: It is estimated there are 115 nationalities speaking about 70 languages in the Jane-Finch area of Toronto.



The *Presbyterian Record* welcomes letters to the editor. Please include your name, home address and a daytime telephone number. We reserve the right to edit all letters for length and clarity.

letters@presbyterianrecord.ca

A Woman's Story...

Lana was desperate to move out of her home. Like many young women who end up on the street she was experiencing abuse at home. Lana came to see the Evangel Hall Mission support program at Central Technical School this fall regarding her options for escaping the abuse. Usually, the options would be various women's shelters and the list of run-down apartments. This past fall, she was given the opportunity to obtain housing at Evangel Hall...



The day Lana moved into her Evangel Hall Mission unit, she was surrounded with the goodwill and support that the Hall is known for. She was given a blanket and dishes for the furnished bachelor apartment which would be her new home. Suzanna Cermak, the Youth Program Co-ordinator will work with her on an ongoing basis to make sure that her transition to a safe haven at Evangel Hall Mission housing will also translate into increased school success.

For Lana, things are finally looking up.

Our programs are always in need of financial support and volunteers!

[redacted]

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people & places



For more People & Places submissions please visit our website: www.presbyterianrecord.ca

Rev. M. Jean Morris, moderator of the 131st General Assembly, celebrated the 220th anniversary, in March, of First, Pictou, N.S., with Rev. Iona MacLean. Together they also noted and marked the 40th anniversary of the ordination of women in The Presbyterian Church in Canada.



"When we sing to God in heaven/ we shall find such harmony/ born of all we've known together/ of Christ's love and agony." (The Book of Praise, 635) Cry of Passion is the name of this band at Calvin, North Bay, Ont. From left: Britanny Nolan, Courtney Love, Erin Woods, Bethany Woods and Michael Lockwood.

HAD CAKE LATELY? Share your celebrations with the rest of the church. Send your stories to PnP@presbyterianrecord.ca along with your digital photographs, 300 dpi minimum, high quality JPEGs. Or mail the photographs to: The Record, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, M3C 1J7.

To be considered for People and Places, photographs should be sharp and everyone clearly identified. The *Record* reserves the right to reject any photos not of sufficient quality. Photographs cannot be returned.

Been there, done that, got the t-shirt, West Vancouver, 2006. That's what it says on Rev. Paul Myers' shirt (left), which was presented to him by the congregation on his last Sunday in March. On the same day, John Rennie celebrated his 95th birthday. To honour this perpetual circle of church life there were two cakes, two sets of balloons and quite a party. (Presbyterian style, of course.)





If you're in the mood for good international food, check out Knox, Belmore, Ont., where you can get Japanese, Australian, Egyptian and Mexican delights. OK, well, maybe it was just a one-shot event, but it did raise $400 for the North Huron Food Bank, courtesy of these young ladies, led by the youthful Marj Deyell. They prepared Japanese cheesecakes and Mexican wedding cakes, amongst other mouthwatering offerings, and served to a well satiated crowd of 40 after church one Sunday in March. The benevolent cooks are Kyla Jeffray, Karla Dickson, Marj, Summer Jeffray and Mary Versteeg.

The Form of Presbyterial Church Government (1645) explains lay leadership by stating that, "Christ has furnished some in the church, beside the Ministers of Word, with gifts for government and with commission to execute the same, when called thereunto, who are to join with the Minister in the government of the church, which officers of the Reformed churches commonly call elders." Debbie Opersko and Rosemary Bennett signed on to that responsibility at Mt. Pleasant, Ont., in April.





We sometimes refer to church as a family, and there is truth in that; think of this as a family portrait from St. Andrew's, Quebec City. In January the church celebrated two ends of its generational spectrum: with its youngest member, Skylar Isobel Giguere (b. Nov. 2005) and its most senior member, Isobel McCartney (b. prior to Nov. 2005).

SPOTLIGHT



"Canada Ministries has looked after Malvern as a child of its own," Christy Kurian, clerk of session, told the Record. "It can be proud of the way Malvern has turned around." Malvern, Scarborough, Ont., is 29 years old and for that time has been working off its manse loan. On April 9th, Mathew Goslinski, administrator for Canada Ministries, handed the manse keys to the church trustees, Sid Latchana, Myra Moyo and Margaret Horigan.

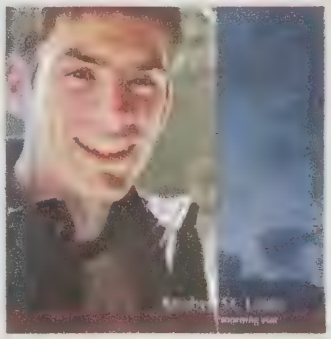
Stories of diaconal ministers wanted

THE ORDER OF DIACONAL MINISTRIES of The Presbyterian Church in Canada will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2008. During those 10 decades, members of the Order have made an important contribution to the work of the denomination, including Christian education, pastoral care and social ministries. Diaconal ministers serve across Canada and around the world.

To celebrate its anniversary, the Order is asking for people who have experienced the ministry of a deaconess or diaconal minister to share their personal anecdotes and stories with the church. The submissions will be gathered together to complete a history of the century of service given by the Order.

There are currently 163 members of the Order, which includes both active and retired members. Although it is still possible to become a member of the Order, the last time a designation occurred was in 1997. Diaconal ministers used to be trained at Ewart College, but since Ewart amalgamated with Knox College in 1991, there has been less of an emphasis on this stream. Donna McIlveen, the Order's administrator, said the fact that women can be ordained as Ministers of Word and Sacrament influenced membership to a lesser extent.

Stories should be sent to The Order of Diaconal Ministries, c/o the Administrator, Donna McIlveen, 1711 County Rd. #2, RR #3, Prescott, Ont., K0E 1T0, or e-mailed to Joyce Davis at glendavis@auracom.com. – *AM*



Youth leader launches cd

REUBEN ST. LOUIS, the youth in mission coordinator for the church is launching his first cd on June 10th at Knox, Waterloo, Ont. A freewill offering that night will be sent to Presbyerian World Service and Development's Towards a World Without AIDS campaign. For more information: www.reubenstlouis.ca.

Seeking a national vision

Assembly Council debates and discusses the work of the church | BY AMY MACLACHLAN

For the first time ever, the provisional Book of Reports for this month's General Assembly were posted online (www.presbyterian.ca) during the first week of May, at the same time reports were sent to commissioners, marking a more public approach to the business of the assembly. The reports detail the work of the church's various committees and departments over the last year and include recommendations to be voted on.

Assembly Council met in March to discuss issues it will be taking to General Assembly. Money and funding, long-range planning and native issues stood out on the agenda, as council members discussed and debated the work of the church.

Questions abounded regarding funding for church programs and ministries, camps and pensions, about establishing pay scales for lay staff, reviewing professorial stipends and approving the national budget for 2007. Specifically, the council decided that the finance committee, in consultation with the audit committee, will conduct a review of the 132 internally restricted funds in the church's financial portfolio valued at more than $11 million, to determine if this money can be used elsewhere.

The council will also set aside time at its November meeting to help formulate guidelines for setting priorities that will assist the management team and finance committee in preparing proposals for deferred bequests.

In response to an overture at last year's assembly, the Life and Mission Agency Committee has been doing research to develop pay scales for lay staff. The committee's interim report was brought to the council for comment, and will also be sent to presbyteries, sessions, synods, the colleges, the Committee on Theological Education and lay staff for comment by December, with final recommendations hopefully going to assembly in 2007.

A total of $100,000 was set aside for grants from the 2005 undesignated bequests to help camps upgrade their water and sewer systems, based on a needs assessment. The Life and Mission Agency will administer applications and the distribution of the funds, determining whose needs are the most urgent, and the PCC's overall need for water/sewer development at camps. This will help determine whether to seek to apply to undesignated bequests next year for further help.

Some of the other key issues include:

- The council will report to assembly that ongoing consultation with the Committee on Theological Education (CTE) and the three colleges is taking place and progress is being made. Conflict arose at last year's assembly when executive church staff was granted a substantial pay raise, while professors were reportedly left out of the consultations.
- CTE will bring its own request to assembly this year, in hopes of fostering more open and amicable conversation with the council. CTE is asking that its convener become a voting member of Assembly Council and that one of the heads of colleges sit on the council as a non-voting member.
- The church's website continues to grow in popularity, with the online donation feature garnering increased attention. As of March, about $22,000 had been donated online, with one recent individual donation for $5,000.
- The church's healing and reconciliation program received a boost when the council passed several recommendations for new initiatives that could have far-reaching and long-lasting effects. See May's *Record* for the full story.
- The Long-Range Planning Committee, after freeing itself of the previous responsibility of setting yearly themes for the church, brought a refreshing outlook on what the church can accomplish, and the challenges and opportunities it will be facing in the years to come. Issues around community, outreach, age, real estate, education, social questions, ethnicity and communication were just some of the topics listed. The council agreed to let the committee review its terms of reference and recommend changes, and instructed it to develop a strategic plan for the denomination.
- Moderator Jean Morris noted that while in Guatemala, she witnessed the coming together of work done by PWS&D, International Ministries and the WMS, as well as interdenominational cooperation with the United Church. "It was wonderful to watch the integration of those parts of our church, coming together in ways that transform lives and communities," she said. "I don't believe that's a fluke. It comes from excellent planning and when we each take the right piece, it comes together wonderfully."
- She also spoke of the diversity of the Presbyterian Church in age, ethnicity, areas of mission, the ways we worship and geography. "I see a need for a national dream; a national vision," said Morris. "Not a program, but ways congregations and ministers can connect and understand themselves as all going in the same direction and contributing to a shared vision in the PCC."

'I see a need for a national dream ... ways congregations and ministers can contribute to a shared vision in the PCC'

Minister deposed for sexual misconduct

Former moderator-nominee insists on his innocence | BY RECORD STAFF

Presbyterian minister Rev. Dr. Robert P. Fourney has been deposed from office for sexual misconduct following an investigation by the Presbytery of East Toronto and its Sexual Abuse and Harassment Committee.

After hearing from three complainants and Fourney, Presbytery voted overwhelmingly on April 25 to remove the former nominee for General Assembly moderator from ministerial office. He is to receive salary and benefits until June 30, 2006.

Fourney had been senior minister at Glenview, Toronto, for nearly 10 years. He has decided not to seek a formal church trial on the charges.

"There really isn't a sense of ending," said presbytery clerk Rev. Jim Biggs. "The congregation has to grapple with this. The complainants still have scars. And Bob has a burden to bear as well."

'There is a sense of relief that a phase of the process has ended. But people are still hurting'

— REV. JIM BIGGS, CLERK, PRESBYTERY OF EAST TORONTO

But Biggs praised the complainants: "It took courage for them to come forward."

As reported in the *Record* last year, Fourney had been charged with sexual assault and sexual exploitation of a 15-year-old male in 1990 when he was minister at St. Andrew's, Windsor, Ont. Fourney pleaded not guilty to the charges in November, 2005, in Owen Sound court. The charges were later dropped when the complainant declined to testify.

Similar charges from an unrelated complainant had been laid against Fourney more than a decade ago that also failed to go to trial. Fourney confirmed last year that following that incident, he authored the unbylined article Guilty of Compassion in the June, 1994, *Record* about a fictitious minister charged with sexual assault. "The day before the trial was to take place," the story reads, "the charges were withdrawn without explanation."

Biggs said he was exhausted by the recent process and cautioned that it was not yet over. "This was such a heavy burden to have to carry because of the affection and respect we have for Rev. Fourney, and for the congregation of Glenview and for the complainants as well," he said.

"Anything that is emotional is tiring; but, you have to do it as well as you can, err on the side of caution."

Presbytery met in camera for its final deliberations and to hear the report of the committee ending an investigation that began in January. Elder Ken Craigie described the special meeting as "the most stressful event of my church life."

The committee advised presbytery it believed the complaints were true and recommended deposition from ministry as the appropriate discipline. It means Fourney may no longer function as a minister in the Presbyterian Church.

"The committee did a great job, they met many, many times and were quite diligent," said Biggs.

Presbytery offered pastoral support to the complainants and their family, to Fourney and his family and to the congregation of Glenview.

"There is a sense of relief that a phase of the process has ended," said Biggs, "but people are still hurting."

According to church policy, Fourney had 10 days after presbytery's decision to request a trial by the next highest court. Given the timing of the case, that would have been General Assembly, not the local synod.

Presbytery was required by church policy to hold its own investigation, putting Fourney on a paid leave of absence after being charged in January 2005. Fourney, who was one of the nominees for moderator of the 2003 General Assembly and former moderator of East Toronto Presbytery, has maintained his innocence throughout the process.

The church's national policy on sexual abuse and harassment was passed by the General Assembly in 1993. The policy provides the church with a method for hearing complaints. "Sexual abuse or harassment of any kind by any church leader, staff or volunteer will not be tolerated," it states. "Every allegation will be taken seriously." Prior to Fourney, nine ministers have had complaints sustained against them. Three of the nine faced criminal charges; two went to trial and one was found guilty.

When a complaint is made, it must be followed by discovery, intervention, investigation and adjudication, learning more about the allegation, hearing from those involved, informing the congregation, session and presbytery, installing pastoral support for all parties, assisting legal authorities in their investigation, and assisting presbytery in its own investigation and decision-making process. If a minister is found guilty under the policy, presbytery decides on disciplinary action, which can be an admonition, rebuke, removal from office or position, or deposition from ministerial office.

In some cases, such as when the accused or complainant is unsatisfied with the decision, presbytery may decide that the matter should proceed to a church court trial as outlined in the *Book of Forms*.

In an interview with the *Record* on press day Fourney restated his innocence. The interview will be published in the July/August issue.

Church pleased with residential settlement

THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT announced a final agreement concerning Indian residential schools, dropping the Presbyterian Church's liability cap from $2.1 million to $1.32 million. Rev. Stephen Kendall, the church's principal clerk, praised the announcement made in Parliament on April 25.

"The Presbyterian Church in Canada is pleased that this comprehensive agreement has been reached," said Kendall. "It's good news all around; it provides acknowledgement in the form of compensation for the residential schools experience that many students found to be a denial of their culture and language. It also continues to provide a fair and compassionate hearing and compensation for cases of serious abuse."

Quoted in *The Globe and Mail*, Assembly of First Nations National Chief Phil Fontaine said, "This is a tremendous day for First Nations, for survivors of residential schools and for Canada."

There had been some concerns from those involved as to whether or not the new Conservative government would honour the $1.9-billion agreement in principle signed by the Liberals last year. All parties agreed to the settlement, including the federal government, legal representatives of the former students of the Indian residential schools and representatives of the Presbyterian, Anglican and United Churches.

Kendall said although the government has approved the agreement, it still has to be approved in courts across Canada before coming into effect. This could take up to one year. "In the meantime, we are very pleased that the government has agreed immediately to consider interim payments for the sick and elderly."

The final agreement not only decreases the church's financial obligation for compensation, it also provides an opportunity for an increased emphasis on healing and reconciliation ministries, and for participation in a Truth and Reconciliation commission.

The compensation process may take as long as eight years to finish. – *AM*



Community health workers bring hope to rural and remote communities in northern India by helping save lives and build healthy communities.

PHOTO: JESSICA MUSTACHI, PWS&D

What do you do when the nearest doctor or nurse is hours – or days – away by foot?

With the support of PWS&D and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Church of North India community health volunteers are working hard to bring health care to rural and remote communities. They are delivering babies and treating thousands of cases of diarrhea, snake bites, measles, scabies and other diseases. They are teaching how immunization and proper nutrition and sanitation can prevent disease. They are also working to build healthy communities by helping families reduce poverty by starting kitchen gardens, improving their agriculture and beginning small businesses.

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Most believe in Christ

THE MAJORITY OF Canadians and Americans believe in the resurrection, and that salvation comes through Christ, according to a recent Ispos Reid survey. However, a significant percentage thinks Jesus' crucifixion was faked.

The April survey, conducted on behalf of CanWest News Service and Global News, found that 17 per cent of Canadians and 13 per cent of Americans label Jesus' death as a hoax, indicating an underlying belief that the resurrection never occurred. This group also believed that "Jesus was married and had a family." Ipsos Reid is speculating that such ideas may be the result of novels like *The Da Vinci Code*, which have popularized the notion that Christ never died for sins.

Still, of the 814 Canadians surveyed, 73 per cent believe Jesus "died on the cross and was resurrected to eternal life," and 62 per cent of Canadians (essentially unchanged from 63 per cent in 1996) believe that "through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, God provided the way for the forgiveness of sins."

Ontario Tories promise faith school funding if elected next year

JOHN TORY, leader of the Ontario Conservative party, has revived a five-year-old debate on faith school funding. Tory was quoted in February after a policy conference saying, he is "completely and totally committed" to addressing "the fairness issue for independent schools. The issue of fairness more starkly presents itself when you are dealing with faith-based schools as opposed to others."

Currently only Catholic schools are subsidized in Ontario. In 2001, premier Mike Harris had announced private school tax credits that could have provided tax relief up to 50 per cent per student. The program was axed by Dalton McGuinty's Liberals two years later. While faith-based schools, along with private schools, welcome subsidies, many defenders of public education believe they will hurt the public system.

The next Ontario election will be held on October 4, 2007.

UCC invests in youth

The United Church of Canada is investing $6-8 million on a two-year project that aims to attract new parishioners between the ages of 30 and 45. *Emerging Spirits* will include internet, television and radio campaigns, support and education for congregations on how to target this age group, and resource teams stationed throughout the country to help congregations in this endeavour.

Phase one, launched last August sought to compile extensive research on 30- to 45-year-olds, helping the church shape its media campaign. Environics Research conducted an online survey, and also included less formal surveys of people on the street. Participants were asked questions pertaining to why they don't go to church, what they are looking for, what is important to them and what they think of the United Church. Many believe in God, but not in traditional ways that churches worship God and don't see the world as black and white. They want their questions about religion to be encouraged, and value inclusiveness and tolerance.

When asked what they believed a church should offer, 77 per cent rated connecting and reaching out, and questioning and embracing, as important. The United Church's emphasis on welcoming people with various sexual and relationship preferences, challenging traditional teachings and overall ideas of openness are things the UCC thinks will appeal to this age group.

Strategies to implement this information for the campaign's second phase are underway and are awaiting final approval at the General Council in August. Most of the multi-million dollar project is being financed by a bequest to the denomination. – *AM*

Presbyterian rock star

SUZIE MCNEIL, step-daughter of Rev. Ian McPherson of Erindale, Mississauga, was chosen as one of the finalists for Rock Star INXS, a reality show to choose the next lead singer for the band. The show aired during the summer of 2005.

A professional musician, McNeil has toured Canada extensively as part of an ABBA tribute band, and can be heard on many radio commercials. She also plays the guitar, harmonica and piano, and, is a Camp Iona, Ont., alumni.

Summer fun—catch one, catch 'em all

General Assembly: June 4th–9th, Brock University, St. Catharines, Ont.

Canada Youth 2006: July 4th–9th, Brock University, St. Catharines, Ont. The largest gathering of Canadian Presbyterians and the real future of our church. www.presbycan.ca/cy2006/

P.E.I. Christian Music Festival: July 14th–16th, Jacques Cartier Arena and Prince County Exhibition Grounds in Alberton. This ecumenical event is organized in part by a local Presbyterian congregation and features a wide variety of music by local, national and international entertainers. Proceeds support the Rev. W.J. Phillips Residence (a seniors' care facility) and the West Prince Angel Network. www.peicmf.com

Nidus Festival: August 4th– 6th, Bingeman Park, Kitchener, Ont. Sponsored in part by the PCC, Nidus is where Christians can "express faith, celebrate through arts and seek justice to stop AIDS." The event features music, speakers, crafts, prayer and worship, films, dance and drama. www.nidus2006.ca

The Scott Woods Band benefit concerts: June–December, various dates and locations. A member of St. Andrew's, Fergus, Ont., and champion fiddler, Woods brings old-time fiddle music to churches across the country to help them raise money for various causes. www.scottwoods.ca – *AM*

PC(USA) cuts 100 jobs

ENI–The Presbyterian Church (USA) has cut more than 100 positions in the most radical church restructuring in more than a decade. The cuts, mandated by General Assembly, are being made in part because congregations and presbyteries, are opting to spend more funds on local rather than national denominational programmes, the denomination said.

"In moving to an objective-based structure, we will be in a stronger position to facilitate the mission activities of the presbyteries and congregations of the PCUSA," assembly council's executive director, John Detterick, said. The cuts will save the denomination some US$5.2 million.

The job cuts are a major part of an overall US$9.15 million budget reduction.

Uganda lamented

ENI–Anglican Bishop Nelson Onono-Onweng has called for immediate action to bring an end to 20 years of violent conflict in his northern Uganda diocese which civil society groups say is one of the worst war zones on the planet, worse even than Iraq. A new report states the death rate in the region is three times higher than that in Iraq.

"I do not want to lament, but I want the international community to realize that we are part of global humanity with rights to life, peace education, culture and wealth," he said in March.

In April, Jan Egeland, the UN's humanitarian coordinator singled out the special role of faith-based groups in bringing aid to crisis-hit northern Uganda.

"I have always been very impressed by the work of faith based organizations and the ability they have to use volunteers on a large-scale," he said, noting that northern Ugandans live in sub-human conditions.

New Bible not violent

ENI–A new inclusive German Bible intended to do justice to women, Jews and marginalised groups has been criticized. "A Bible in the German language has to be sensitive about racism and ethnic discrimination because of the Shoah," said Luise Metzler, who has raised funds for the project in which 52 translators are translating the original Hebrew and Greek.

The new translation aims to tone down violent language while also taking into account the perspectives of feminist and liberation theology. It makes reference to female as well as male disciples, apostles and deacons. "The interpreters translate what they find in the Old and the New Testaments," said Metzler. "If they recount stories of war, violence and abuse we name it. But we don't want to use military language or violent words unless it is necessary."

CFGB delivers to Kenya

In response to the drought in Kenya, Canadian Foodgrains Bank is going to deliver over 5,000 metric tonnes of maize, beans, yellow split peas, and edible oil. The value of the food aid will be approximately $2.7 million.

Sixty percent of the food will be purchased in the region, in areas not affected by drought. The rest will be shipped from Canada.

Canadian Foodgrains Bank is a partnership of 13 church-based agencies.

WACC moves to T.O.

ENI–The World Association for Christian Communication, a global media development and advocacy network, is relocating its headquarters from London to Toronto following a decline in grants from European donors to cover its core budget.

The group is known for promoting the communication rights of marginalized peoples as well as supporting training in small-format broadcast production and publishing for community groups in the global south and eastern Europe.

"This will broaden our horizons," said Sam Carriere, director of communications for the Anglican Church of Canada, one of WACC's 11 member churches in North America. "It is useful to be reminded of global issues."

The Toronto offices will be housed in Hope United Church, headed by Presbyterian Rev. Douglas du Charme.

Disturber meets his peace

William Sloane Coffin, a former Yale University chaplain, civil rights activist and self-proclaimed "disturber of the peace" who revelled in infuriating his critics, died, aged 81 in April. Receiving an award in 2003 he said, "American Christians need forcefully and fearlessly to remind our leaders that it was the devil who tempted Jesus with unparalleled power and wealth," Coffin said. "And it is the devil in each American that makes us love to feel powerful."

Ordained as a Presbyterian, he later joined the United Church of Christ.

Record awarded

The *Record's* Amy MacLachlan was the big winner at the annual Canadian Church Press awards in Winnipeg in May, taking three awards for three 2005 articles. She won first and third prize in the magazine news story category, for a story on bullying she wrote for *Glad Tidings* and for a piece on Sharia laws in Ontario. She received another first place in the narrative category for her Israel travelogue in October. The judge noted, "It addresses many of the fears of would-be travellers and shows how open and caring she found the people to be."

Editor David Harris received first place for his editorial Child Poverty Truly Threatens the Family. Columnist David Webber continued his winning ways with a first place citation for Chock Full of Surprises in the theological reflection category. Managing Editor Andrew Faiz received second place in humour for Searching for the Faith in Faith Books.

Designer Samantha Edwards received two second place awards for the whole December issue and for the travel package in October. The judge said Edwards had great skill in design, colour and choice of images. Various book reviews written by Art Van Seters, Douglas du Charme and Richard Topping garnered the *Record* a third place in the media review category.

Faiz received second place for his Pop Christianity column at the American Church Press awards in Florida in April. MacLachlan was also honoured for her bullying story.

Weird scenes inside the goldmine

A random survey of the moral-spiritual zeitgeist

BY ANDREW FAIZ



Not a day goes by, it seems to me, without some newspaper of magazine article that somehow touches upon the moral, ethical, spiritual or religious zeitgeist. So, over the Easter weekend I clipped random stories. Here's but a taste of those clippings—they are a snapshot of our times, they contradict each other, they support each other, they paint a portrait of the world in which we live. I present them without comment. However, I invite you to comment on them. What do you make of it all? Send your comments, or clippings, to my attention and perhaps they too will form a time capsule.

- The growing presence in the past two decades of people of other world faiths—notably Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism—has added important vitality to the Canadian religious scene. Evangelicals are flourishing. The Protestant mainline is finally showing signs of awakening from a 40-year slumber. –Reg Bibby, *The Globe and Mail*, April 17
- Of all the threats that our messy world faces, nuclear weaponry ranks right up there. Combine the bomb with anti-Semitism and you've got a combination that should make any reasonable person recoil. No wonder human rights activist Elie Weisel … pulled no punches when describing Iran's president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, as "pathologically sick." –Irshad Manji, *The Globe and Mail*, April 17
- Of the 814 Canadians polled by Ipsos, 30 described themselves as agnostic. Four of these agnostics, however, professed a positive belief in the Resurrection, and three actually agreed with the statement, "I feel it is very important to encourage non-Christians to become Christians." It's possible that the four didn't know what agnostic meant but liked the sound of it and that the three were Straussians. Or maybe all seven were just having a little joke, like the one self-described atheist who expressed agreement with "the world will end in the Battle of Armageddon." –Colbycosh.com, April 15
- The Irish band U2 has given Britain its favourite song lyric, according to a survey released by music channel VH1. The line, "One life, with each other, sisters, brothers" from the song One topped the poll. Runner-up was the downbeat, "So you go and you stand on your own, and you go home, and you cry, and you want to die" from The Smiths' How Soon Is Now. –AP story, *The Toronto Star*, April 17
- The Christian Peacemaker Teams are so ideologically bound and so convinced they are right that they fail to see their "mission" as a perversion of Jesus's teaching. I may be wrong but I'm convinced the gentle, loving Jesus, Loney and his group profess to follow, would want no part of [the situation in Iraq]. Furthermore, where were the CPT when Saddam Hussein was gassing thousands of Kurds? –Letter to the Editor, *The Toronto Star*, April 17
- Margaret Wente says that she enjoys being a cultural Christian. I'm not sure what she means by this. We are a pitiful lot indeed if we count ourselves in the camp of Christians and yet do not hold the bedrock belief of the Christian faith—that Christ died, was buried and rose from the dead. –Letter to the Editor, *The Globe and Mail*, April 17
- In a world that seems to have gone delirious with religion what a relief to hear Margaret Wente say, "I also believe that all claims made about the life of Jesus are about as reliable as claims made about the existence of the Easter Bunny." Indeed, when one reads enough history, it becomes obvious that a literal interpretation of the New Testament is naively diabolical. –Letter to the Editor, *The Globe and Mail*, April 17
- The seminary was introducing podcasts that would address pop-culture phenomena like *The Da Vinci Code* from a Christian point of view, and Ross's team had put together a press release. "Putting God in the Pod," was its headline. [Riggs read it and] grimaced. "The title of putting God somewhere—it implies that he's not everywhere," he said. Hudson thought about it. "Can we take out 'putting'? And then it's just God in the Pod, and it acknowledges he's already there?" Ross said he believed that would take care of the problem. … The final decision was to headline the release "Putting the Message of God in the Pod." –*The New York Times Magazine*, April 16

Andrew Faiz is a writer, producer and filmmaker. He is also managing editor of the *Record*. You can reach him at mngeditor@presbyterianrecord.ca.



summer book club

Presbyterian style

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Relegating Christianity to the margins

Tracing the decline of Protestantism within public universities | BY MARGARET OGILVIE

A Long Eclipse:
The Liberal Protestant Establishment and the Canadian University, 1920-1970
Catherine Gidney
McGill-Queens University Press



Although Catherine Gidney's fine study of the decline of Protestantism within the Canadian public university finishes well within living memory in 1970, the university she describes seems as alien as that of the 15th century. At the end of a long eclipse is darkness and Christianity has now truly disappeared from Canada's taxpayer-funded universities, leaving little evidence that the light of Christ will shine in their dark halls any time soon. Christianity has been banished from the classroom and the common room; Christian faculty and students are few, marginalized, not infrequently ridiculed and best advised to stay in the closet; and any remaining vestiges such as church-funded chaplaincies are barely tolerated and largely invisible, swallowed up in the massive therapeutic bureaucracy devised by desperate administrators to attract, comfort and console the lost generations who wander aimlessly through for a few years of their young lives.

A Long Eclipse is a meticulously researched and thoughtful account of how liberal Protestants lost the universities over the course of the 20th century. It does not attempt to explain how that loss could have been avoided or whether that forgetful moment in the history of Christianity in Canada

Most people admit to being happy most of the time about their lives. But rising affluence and happiness is the outcome of scientific innovation and commercial exploitation, neither of which have much connection to the universities

contains the seeds of recovery. Rather it chronicles the process and the reasoning of those responsible for the short decline into oblivion. It is a melancholic read about how seemingly good intentions can produce unforeseen and devastating results for the well-intentioned and their descendants. Gidney concludes that it was the very willingness of the majority of presidents and faculty to open up the universities in keeping with the Charter values in Canada—toleration, pluralism, relativism, neutrality, equality—that resulted in the eclipse of Christianity.

To plumb what these men were thinking, Gidney focuses on the culture of the 20th century university rather than on the classroom. Her book complements earlier books by A.B. McKillop (*A Disciplined Intelligence* and *Matters of Mind*), which examined the secularization of classroom education over the late 19th and 20th centuries, by studying student life and culture outside the classroom, especially the moral regulation of campus life by administrators and faculty, student clubs, sporting activities and mission activities, as well as religious life on campus in chapels and chaplaincy offices. Anyone who attended university into the early 1970s will recognize the culture. My students today would not. Paradoxically, they might have more in common with students of 15th century Paris, being divided into nations and anxious to master the new learning.

Gidney traces the evolution of the public university over the past century from when it was considered to be a moral community organized by Christian values to when it became a Babel of postmodernity, accommodating all, privileging none, but disowning the few who disagreeably cling to Western Christian cultural values. The marginalization of Christianity began at the top as presidents and faculty concluded that Christianity was best inculculated outside the classroom, which by the late 19th century had been given over to secularism. Deans of residences and chaplains were tasked with ensuring that Christian values prevailed in the residences, at chapel, orientation events, parties, dances and campus clubs. This relegation of Christianity to the margins of university life paralleled the marginalization of scriptural and creedal Christianity by social activists within the Protestant denominations, as the social gospel and its secular twin, socialism, came to be regarded as the sum total of a Christianity, cut adrift from Christ, the giver without end of the gift without end.

Gidney's study shows that it was not until the 1960s that the final eclipse suddenly came, thereby confirming the view of scholars such as Callum Brown (*The Death of Christian Britain*) that the 1960s were the watershed for Christian predominance in Western societies. Secularization may have been a work in progress from the mid-19th century but only in the 1960s did it become unstoppable or transformable.

Undoubtedly university presidents, faculty and their supporting denominations were largely well intentioned. There is much in our present age for which to be grateful: all persons in Western societies have fuller opportunities to exercise their innate abilities and enjoy full human dignity; rising affluence has eliminated genuine hunger and material need from industrialized societies and promises to do the same soon for industrializing societies worldwide with the troubling exception of Africa; and in polls most people admit to being happy most of the time about their lives. But rising affluence and happiness is the outcome of scientific innovation and commercial exploitation, neither of which have much connection to the universities. There was, therefore, no reason for Christians to abandon the universities to secularism. Contemporary society with its opportunities for all would still have resulted and Christians like all other groups would still have a place where they could enjoy integrity as a community among communities. But this is to stray too far from Gidney's book.

The abandonment of the universities, which were founded and once funded by liberal Protestants in the course of the 20th century, is considered by many of their descendants as an achievement. For a minority of Christians it is a matter for regret and melancholy because there are no major universities in Canada today, with the exception of the recently founded Trinity Western University, where Protestants can enjoy the advantages of a first-class university education within the context of a Christian scholarly community. For some this concept is sectarian and anathema; for others it is part of a vision for future Christian renewal. Liberal Protestants may see *A Long Eclipse* as an account of a world well lost while classical Protestants may see it as a warning from the past. But the debate about the value of Christian universities in Canada is one we should have soon if our eclipse in our land is not to become permanent.

M.H. Ogilvie is a member of Knox, Ottawa, and Chancellor's Professor of Law at Carleton University, Ottawa.

Beyond fundamentalism and liberalism

Inviting the church to live out its calling in courageous faith

BY ART VAN SETERS

The End of Words: The Language of Reconciliation in a Culture of Violence
Richard Lischer
Eerdmans

When the sheer terror of genocide in Rwanda or Darfur confronts us, we are left speechless. Many have called the horrors of Auschwitz and Hiroshima unspeakable. Victims of violent acts often feel utterly unable to speak of what has happened to them. Words can lose their potency in the face of violence and conflict. Add to this the shameless and deceptive manipulation of language regarding many hostilities and we might well ask, how can we hear the message of Jesus Christ in such a world—particularly in the Sunday sermon?

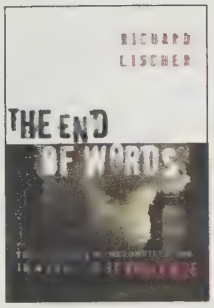
In this remarkable volume Richard Lischer of Duke Divinity School invites us to grapple in a fundamental way, not just with the challenge of specific examples of violence, but with the very core of what it means to preach in today's conflicted world. One pastor, after reading this book, invited the whole congregation to explore its pages. Sermons, then, might never be the same!

Lischer begins with our common experience. Through technology we are deluged with a sea of words and subliminal images. The average person is subjected to as many as 6,000 messages per day and these are presented as though we also have an infinite number of choices. How do we respond, and will our technology outrun our theology?

Some preachers end up feeling ambivalent about their preaching. They believe in the power of God's Word, but they haven't seen it lately in their ministry. They may even be tempted to accommodate the sermon (in content and presentation) to the world around them. It may then sound or look relevant but it becomes an utterance without the authority or passion formed by the Gospel.

What is at stake in the calling of a preacher? Preachers are called to humble obedience. Christ, and our witness to him, empowers in an age when so many are stupefied and traumatized. Preparation for next Sunday's sermon begins "at the end of words," in silence before Jesus Christ, the Word Incarnate.

From this description of the vocation to preach, Lischer explores the question, "How does the preacher read the Bible in order to preach it?" Central to the process of interpreting is rereading so that the congregation can hear it afresh and with authority for its own present situation as a living word. This enables the church to move beyond a fundamentalism that worships the book and a liberalism that marginalizes it. The social location of the Bible, Lischer reminds us, is the church in the first century. We need to learn how to live within the theological mindset of that church in order to see how the Bible is finally an account of God's empowerment through Christ. This is the sermon's "only wedge into contemporary consciousness."



Preaching, then, is a slow and careful reading of Scripture by the community of God's people to enter the world of the Bible where the reality of the church is central. Sermons need to get lost in that text in order to embody it—and in this way to point to Christ. Were congregations to see this clearly, they would no longer be inclined to compliment the preacher at the door as though the sermon is a matter of the preacher's own performance. Instead, their appreciation would be focused on the Gospel seen through the jagged perspective of the Cross.

In light of a clear understanding of calling and the process of interpreting Scripture, Lischer finally moves to the ultimate purpose of preaching. He finds this in the words of the Apostle Paul, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself and has entrusted to us the ministry of reconciliation." (II Cor. 5:19) While the people of God need to be reconciled, reconciliation also has the social dimension of embracing others.

Individual and group identity in our world has often led to unimaginable social conflict because such identity is based on differentiating ourselves from others. The Gospel roots our identity, not in differentiation, but in relation to God in whose image we are created. Through faith in Christ we find ourselves to be a new creation.

To help congregations discover the way of reconciliation, preaching begins with clarifying the way things are in the world and in our lives. It admits the blunt reality of our brokenness, moves to confession and the good news of reconciliation. It also addresses the need in reconciliation for both the Spirit and the community of God's people. Desmond Tutu could not have given such courageous leadership in the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission without the life of the church that journeyed with him.

In light of all this, Lischer urges the church to renounce the Western combative rhetorical tradition that is fundamentally

marked by over-againstness. With the Apostle Paul (II Corinthians) we are called to reject debate and approach preaching "in weakness and in fear and in much trembling" to point to the power of God's Spirit. The reconciling sermon is not just rhetoric; it originates in the preacher's theological vision of reconciliation. We need to tell the truth but to do so with open arms. "We preach toward reconciliation but also from a reservoir of forgiveness that, had we not received it and shared it among ourselves, we could not speak it."

Violence puts an end to words, but the true end of words is the reconciliation that already indwells those who seek it. Here is a most compelling volume that invites the church to live out its calling in humble and courageous faith.

Rev. Arthur Van Seters is Principal Emeritus of Knox College, Toronto and moderator of the 125th General Assembly.

Ask for help via prayer

And you'll be surprised by the miracles that can happen in your life | BY VALERIE M. DUNN

Sacred Simplicities:
Seeing the Miracles in Our Lives
Lori Knutson
Path Books, ABC Publishing



Psychologist Carl Jung wrote about the concept of synchronicity, apparently random events that happen in your life and help you. Once you start to recognize these things and look for them, more happen.

This is God at work, and those miracles that Knutson says are circling around looking for a place to land, start to appear in your life once you ask in prayer, and then anticipate their arrival. Sound familiar? Check out the scriptures—you'll realize miracles didn't just appear, they were requested and anticipated. "No one's watching for a miracle and few are praying for one in our church sanctuaries," Knutson writes. "Perhaps there are a hundred miracles circling overhead like exhausted birds, just waiting and waiting for a place to land, if only there was an open space and someone to notice."

Knutson wonders if we make room for miracles. We love the good life, we're comfortable, yet they may be happening all around us and we don't notice.

In a Bible study group we were discussing significant events in our lives. I said, "The biggest change was when I decided, feeling pushed by an inner urge I didn't quite understand, to become self-employed and chose to live without a regular pay cheque."

'Perhaps there are a hundred miracles circling overhead like exhausted birds, just waiting and waiting for a place to land, if only there was an open space and someone to notice'

Thinking of Knutson's comments, I realized that was when I became aware of miracles happening in my life. Being outside of a work structure which I loved, and where I felt secure and needed, I had to look more to God for answers: what do I do next and where do I go? Work arrived quickly; I was soon snowed under. Still, one summer I found myself with nothing happening. "God, what do I do now?"

The next day I was relaxing in a downtown coffee shop when in walked a person I had known for years, but hadn't seen. Chatting, she told me she urgently needed someone to ghost-write articles for a professional journal which she had promised but was just too swamped to do.

You guessed it! That kept me busy and financially secure for the rest of the summer.

Don't know how to ask for a miracle? The word Help sent in prayer is often enough.

Then, expect something to happen. And don't be too fussy about what and when. It may take years. I started my own newspaper five years into self-employment and I began to get intuitions that this was intended to be larger in scope than I had intended. (Intuitions, the gentle inner nudges that come, are one of the ways God lets you know what is required of you. And if you don't listen they get louder and stronger.)

If you want help with this idea read this book. But more, just start. Get into a conversation with God about miracles. Have fun doing it. And see what happens.

Valerie Dunn is a publisher and editor in Toronto, and a member of Gateway Community.

Listening for God in the community

A challenging book that encourages a prayerful dialogue | BY TED SIVERNS

Becoming a Blessed Church
N. Graham Standish
Alban Institute



Looking at the title I start with a certain bias in reviewing this book; my understanding is that the church is already blessed. Maybe I could suggest a different name: You are a Blessed Church, Now Get with the Program. Perhaps that wouldn't do either, since what Standish clearly wants is less program, more prayer. Less plea that God would get behind our schemes but more a seeking of the will of God in this matter. This always raises for me the question of how we know the voice is that of God and not a devil or delusion. Maybe a subtitle could read: Listening for the Voice of God in Community.

Standish begins with his own story of an early discovery that there was much hypocrisy in the church. Leaving the church while a teenager, he eventually became a counsellor but found his way back to the church and to ministry. It may be helpful to know that Standish has a doctorate in spiritual direction and this has surely shaped his understanding and approach. Spirituality is at the heart of the congregation and the attendant gift of healing ministry is also evident. "To love is to heal," Standish observes.

In worship as in other matters, the congregation includes the traditional along with the contemporary. His critique of the contemporary mainline church is primarily threefold:

- It is shaped by ministers who are too academic—in large part though not exclusively so, thanks to the seminaries. There may be better ways of saying this as it could sound like God is present more in feeling than in thinking. Such a conclusion would be hotly contested by generations who were taught and believed that God speaks through our hearts and minds but our emotions are less to be trusted. Standish is nuanced however and would have me posit the contrast as putting trust in "our ability" on one hand and being open to the Holy Spirit on the other.
- Many congregations are dysfunctional as they seek stability and resist change. First they lapse into functionalism (the wrong things in the rite order) and this eventually and inevitably leads to that form of breakdown called dysfunctional.
- Many pastors are unhealthy, indeed broken. There are congregations that have the habit of breaking a minister every few years and many ministers who do not have the spiritual resources to challenge and change that pattern.

On the other hand the Blessed Church is one that sees itself as the Body of Christ, has a vibrant sense of faith, hope and love, is a church filled with God's purpose, presence and power, embraces the sacred and is not afraid to serve God in its own way. Later chapters describe how to bring about these changes.

Standish insists on a Trinitarian understanding of God through this book but his emphasis is clearly on the Holy Spirit.

I commend to you the appendices which cover 14 subjects with good suggestions and helpful ideas, including: discerning budgets and the budgeting process, stewardship, becoming an elder, creating a prayer group and a guide to healing prayer. There is much that is worth pondering here and each chapter has reflections designed to help that process.

This is a book that is worthy of (prayerful) consideration. I have found it to be challenging and shall continue the dialogue with it along with other books that are designed to help us be the denomination and congregations that God would have us be.

Rev. Dr. Ted Siverns is director of Presbyterian Formation at Vancouver School of Theology.

God is an antique trunk

The trunk has been passed down from generation to generation and its beauty is ageless, untouched by time or change. Many people think that it is outdated and has no significance in the world today, but they do not have the key. There is only one way to open the trunk and discover the beauty inside and the key is attainable to whoever accepts it, but many don't. The trunk and its contents are majestic! The treasures inside are beautiful beyond description. The thing that is most incredible about the trunk is that it is personal. The name of each one who opens it is engraved on the velvet-lined lid. It's as though the trunk were handcrafted just for each individual. As though it is the centre of one's being, and the reason for living. This trunk is my life. – *Chelsea Wood, 15, of Forbes, Grande Prairie, Alta.*



Smells like teen spirit

Krystal Meyers
Essential Records
To hear tracks: www.krystalmeyers.com

Sixteen-year-old Krystal Meyers, on her self-titled debut, mixes Christian lyrics with a rock-driven, electric guitar-charged sound. She has put out a safe, solid collection of tunes. With vocals, music and a style that immediately echoes mainstream punk-pop princess Avril Lavigne, Meyers may well find a following with young girls. (Lavigne's breakout production team is behind this album.)

The Tennessee native started singing in church at age five and began writing songs in grade school. Her album was released last June; the first single, The Way to Begin, was added to WOW Hits 2006—a compilation of the year's biggest Christian hits.

Her song Anticonformity sounds like a motto for Meyers, who champions the idea that teens shun the dominant culture around them, opting for a godly, Christian life instead: "So I'm anticonformity / I don't try too hard to be / I'm not what you think you see / Inside I've made a change / And I'll never be the same."

The album offers several enjoyable ballads including Sing for Me and the refreshing Lovely Traces, which recognizes the often challenging journey to the road of faith: "Lovely traces fall behind you / Turn around and you will see / Lovely traces to remind you / Everything that you've been through / What it took to get you to me."

The lyrics, like most of her songs and like many popular Christian cross-over tracks, are not blatant. Indeed, a non-Christian may pick up this album and think it's filled with standard love songs, rather than praise and thanks for God's grace: "I'm seeing for the first time / The changes on the inside shining through / Your love is the reason I'm alive / So as I live my life / In everything I do / I hope You see reflections of You."

Although her songs aren't ground-breaking, and her limited vocal range often leaves the listener yearning for more, this young musician has put together a thoughtful, honest, album that examines the trials and tribulations of being a Christian teenager. – *Amy MacLachlan*

They did God's will

Imagining the women whose stories are lost in the Bible | BY KENNETH STRIGHT

Lost Women of the Bible: Finding Strength and Significance Through Their Stories
Carolyn Custis James
Zondervan



It didn't take long to compile the propositions James would use in her unfolding story of lost women. First comes the acknowledgement that the window used to view women in the Bible has always been more a slit than a panoramic vista of possibility and potential. That must change! Yes! She then offers (through Eve) the potential to view women in a new light. Eve's story got frozen in time at one moment—with one bite her story was told for all time. James invites us to see Eve (and all other women of the Bible, lost or found) through three necessary perspectives.

Eve's first nature is as one created in the image of God. Every woman is also an "ezer"—traditionally translated as helpmate (to the man) but expanded by James to include the more comprehensive concept of warrior, women who stand in defence of the kingdom of God and the ongoing plans and purposes of God. Finally, woman is part of the blessed alliance consisting of women and men who join together to accomplish God's will in the world. Somewhere in here the message still comes through that Eve was the instigator of the fall and that she finds her purpose in partnership with men (and is the reverse true?). It is these three images of woman that take us on our quest for the lost women of the Bible.

Stop for a moment. How do you feel about these propositions? Are they the foundation for finding the stories of the lost women of the Bible, or for telling the story of women from a biblical perspective? Let's move on and see.

How do you tell the story of a woman of whom nothing is written? That's the problem of telling the story of Noah's nameless wife. (No, she wasn't Joan of Ark!). Yet if you connect with the three propositions, you can re-create a fairly consistent story of the woman she would have been if anyone had taken the time to tell her story. What does the Bible actually tell us about her? She was a wife and mother who lived through difficult and disastrous days. And whatever else you can say, she was there by her husband's side through fire and flood! There is no criticism here of a patriarchal society that diminished women and downplayed their participation to the

How do you tell the story of a woman of whom nothing is written?

point of excluding this woman's very name. Stand By Me might be the song Noah would sing to her but she has no song of her own to sing and no voice with which to tell her story. And when we're done with this chapter, she is still voiceless and powerless … and nameless.

The propositions about women are in a specific context—actually the entire salvation story must be seen in context and James makes certain we know the gravity of the situation.

Eve received the promise that the seed of the woman would crush the serpent's head. By faith, elderly Sarah gained strength to conceive Isaac, the son of promise. Tamar, the righteous Canaanite, valiantly risked everything to preserve the promised line that was dying off under Judah's watch. Hannah, through her son Samuel, nurtured the royal line of David with her profound theology. And the teenager from Nazareth offered herself as the bond slave of the Lord to become the mother of Jesus. And this is only the short list of the women who fought to preserve and protect the promised seed.

But no, there is no call to liberate woman from a paternalistic society. This is a more gentle call to recognize the contribution women have made to the salvation story in spite of the tendency in a male-dominated society to minimize the contribution of woman. And this, for James, is the true divine gift in these stories. "We follow Jesus, and no one who follows Jesus is lost."

Rev. Ken Stright was one of the few men at The Decade festival in Harare, Zimbabwe in Solidarity with Women, in 1988.

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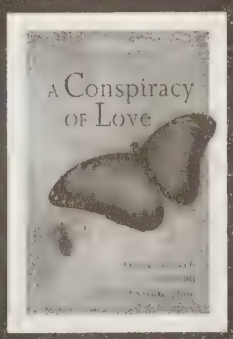
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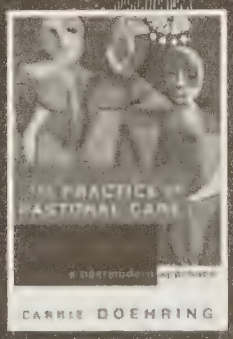
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A Christian view of a middle-class family

The Simpsons may go to church regularly, but they're never seen as religious fanatics

BY MIKE COBB

The Gospel According to The Simpsons
By Mark Pinsky
Westminster John Knox Press

Rev. Lovejoy, the Protestant minister on *The Simpsons*, once comments that a small group of people split off from the Presbyterians to worship an Inanimate Carbon Rod. This is the motto of the Springfield Christian School: "We put the fun in Fundamental dogma."

Pinsky starts out by explaining that a lot of our Christian values and principles are made to look silly. Take the Simpsons' neighbour, Ned Flanders, who is an evangelical Christian. He believes doing good deeds will ensure that he has the necessary credits to get into heaven. *The Simpsons*, to varying degrees, reflects middle-class values.

My experience with the show is limited to the odd episode, which I watched with my sons during their teenage years. I was curious to see what the attraction was for young people. Let's review the characters. Lisa is a good starting point. She is the gifted eight-year-old daughter of Homer and Marge Simpson and is a strong proponent of social justice. Homer represents the views of many in the mainline churches; he attends church regularly but does not have a significant commitment to core beliefs. However, he wants his children to learn right from wrong. His wife, Marge, is a stay-at-home mom. Their son, Bart, is a 10-year-old with attitude. The baby, Maggie, does not play much of a role as she does not speak, preferring to suck on a pacifier. It is interesting that the Simpsons go to church regularly but are not labelled as religious fanatics.

The show's writers recognize that certain Christian topics

Hold your torch, let it shine

Singer/ songwriter Andrew Peterson has a 'baptized imagination'

The Far Country
Andrew Peterson
To hear tracks: www.andrew-peterson.com

On his latest album, *The Far Country*, independent singer/songwriter Andrew Peterson sings about death and heaven. The songs range from the story of a woman dying of AIDS, to his sons, to a trip to Alaska. One might expect an album infused with references to the ultimate mortality of humankind to be depressing. However, Peterson's latest effort glows with joy and conviction.

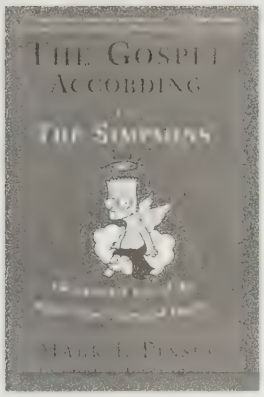
How can listening to a song about a woman dying of AIDS possibly end up being an uplifting experience? Well, first you put the creation of the song in the hands of Peterson and his God-given gifts for song writing. What results is The Queen of Iowa, which tells the story of Peterson and the album's producer, Ben Shive, playing a concert in the living room of an AIDS patient.

The lyrics are honest and unflinching regarding the Queen's condition: "She was dying on her couch in the suburbs." At the same time they are infused with profound hope, which comes from faith in God, "I bowed down low and I kissed her hand/And we raised a toast to the Promised Land."

Next, you get an insanely talented group of musicians together and they manage to make the surprisingly light melody gambol along on the sound of acoustic instruments. In the end, Peterson's lyric "I will never be the same," seems to apply not only to his experience of playing for the Queen, but also to the experience of those listening to the song.

In another stand-out song, Peterson mixes together images of the imaginative games his sons play with references to the Narnia Chronicles by C.S. Lewis and the Gospels. What he comes up with is a song that affirms the adventure and mystery of the Christian journey: "Feel the beat of a distant thunder/It's the sound of an ancient song/This is the Kingdom calling/Come now, and tread the dawn." It's the type of song you want to listen to as you drive down a country road on a clear autumn day.

Peterson refers to All Shall Be Well as his favourite song



'We put the fun in Fundamental dogma'

are off limits. For example, they stay away from the cruxifiction and resurrection of Christ and indeed Christ's life is largely left untouched. Pinsky points out that maybe this is a little too close to home for many Americans and more importantly, there may not be a lot of laughs in poking fun at Christ. Not so with God, who is depicted in many of the episodes dealing with religion. Pinsky quotes Kenneth Briggs, a professor at Lafayette University, who defended *The Simpsons*' overall treatment of Christianity, saying "I don't see anybody taking any cheap shots. It gives mainline Protestants a fair shake."

Mike Cobb is a member of the Record's board.



from the album. Here he records his experiences from a trip to Alaska. The purpose of the trip was to encourage those ministering to native villages in the extreme conditions—day-long night, long winters, isolation—of the far north. In this part of the world, where sex offence and suicide are rampant, ministers do not tend to last long. Again, Peterson does not shy away from the darkness he sees. Instead he sees it with what a friend of mine calls a "baptized imagination"—that is, one that acknowledges misery but sees it as an opportunity for Christ to be triumphant. He sings, "There is a wilderness inside them / It is dark and thick and deep / And beside the fire at the heart of that wood/Is a precious missing sheep / So go on in, hold your torch, let it shine." When he follows these lyrics up with the line "Cause all shall be well, all shall be well," the result is not a flippant dismissal of the problems of Native Americans in Alaska, but a word of solace to a people in pain. *–Rebekah Mitchell is a graduate of Knox College, Toronto.*

MOCHA MISSION CONTEST SUBMISSION

Thirsty Presbyterians

by Heather Darch

Thirsty Presbyterians
Thirsty Presbyterians

See how they run
See how they run

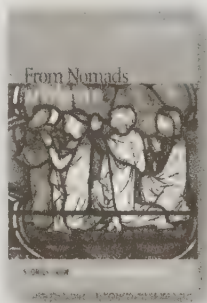
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while having some fun,

We're thirsty Presbyterians!

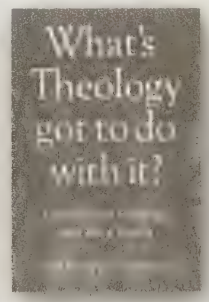
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ESSAY

His words do not pass away

Jesus could read and write, and that's the Gospel truth | BY BARRY BALDWIN

Lloyd Evans in the British weekly *Spectator* unequivocally asserts that Jesus could not read, a claim made by many books and Internet sites, glossed in Northrop Frye's *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature* by placing Christ in the oral tradition of Socrates and other early Greek philosophers who wrote nothing, their teachings preserved by loyal disciples.

Luke 4:16-20 describes Jesus giving a public reading from Isaiah in the synagogue at Nazareth. Some moderns evasively claim either that Luke has invented the scene or that the book was merely a stage prop, Christ actually reciting by heart. But Luke's scene, "There was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written ... And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister and sat down," has the ring of authenticity.

This audience was impressed: "And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him." Unlike the Jewish Temple congregation which (John 7:15) exclaimed, "How knoweth this man letters (*grammata*), having never learned?" However, their clamour died away when Jesus continued his speech. It is hard to believe that the precocious boy who dazzled Jewish professional scholars at Jerusalem with his theological acumen (Luke 2:46-48) was illiterate.

Since the fisherman Peter was literate, as most scholars since Eusebius (*Church History*) agree, accepting that his first epistle is genuine (if not the second), there is no reason why a carpenter's son could not equally be so. Not to mention Paul, a tent maker, tricultural as a Hellenised Jew turned Christian, who could debate Epicurean and Stoic philosophers at Athens (Acts 17:18-38), quoting "certain of your own poets" against them, and also cite a verse from classical drama to other Hellenes (1 Corinthians 15:33): "Evil communications corrupt good manners."

Luke's lone mention of Christ reading is balanced by a single (John 8:6-8) reference to his writing: "But Jesus stooped down and with his finger wrote on the ground." Those who reject the Luke anecdote tend to avoid this passage. There is also his Letter to Abgar, quoted (in Greek) by Eusebius, allegedly found in the Syriac archives at Edessa. This usually overlooked item is not in all Eusebian manuscripts and some Syrian ones say it was actually penned by Ananias at Jesus' dictation. Hence, a Scottish verdict of Not Proven. It should be added that Christ, who never preached overseas and was constantly with his disciples, had little need to write letters.

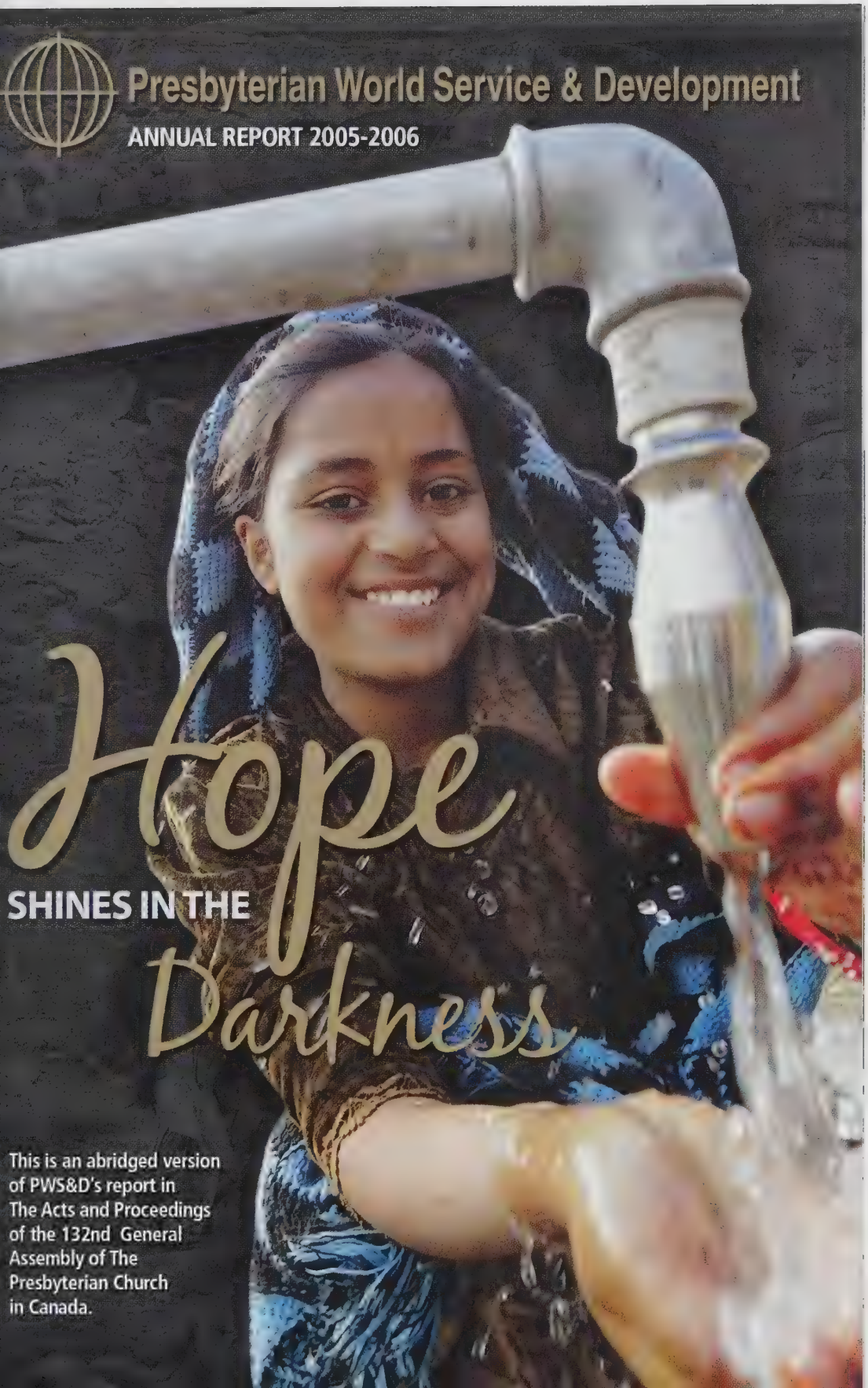
Jesus' youthful education is a famous mystery. However, John twice (20 and 21) makes it clear that we do not know everything. His first such observation concerns the resurrected Christ. The second his temporal life: "And there are also many things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."

Against Northrop Frye and those (like, M. Bar-Ilan, *Illiteracy in the Land of Israel in the First Centuries*) who estimate that only three per cent of the population could read, there are references to Jesus' literacy in all four Gospels (Matthew 4, 12, 19, Mark 2, 11, 12, 14, 27, Luke 3, 4, 6, 7, 20, John 6, 8). Jesus constantly says, to audiences of all stripes, "It is written" (sometimes adding specific Old Testament titles) and "Have ye not read ... ?"

While it is not, of course, surprising that Jewish priests were literate, Luke's (1:63) account of Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, "asking for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His Name is John," is a striking anticipation of Marshall McLuhan's motto that the medium is the message.

Despite the doubting Thomases, then, Jesus could surely read and write. For believers, he is The Word. Let Matthew 24:35 have the final say: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

Barry Baldwin is Emeritus Professor of Classics at the University of Calgary and a fellow of the Royal Society of Canada.


Presbyterian World Service & Development
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This is an abridged version of PWS&D's report in The Acts and Proceedings of the 132nd General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Director's Message

The year 2005 could be called the year of emergencies. The Tsunami, Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Stan, the earthquake in Southeast Asia, civil conflict in Darfur, drought in Malawi and Niger – are only a few of the emergencies that PWS&D responded to.

These emergencies remind us that the poor are very vulnerable to disasters – caused by nature's force or human action. The poor tend to live in more precarious conditions, and cannot escape disasters or recover from them easily. We are also reminded that illiteracy, hunger, extreme poverty are also disasters that many people face everyday.

Canadian Presbyterians continue to make a difference in the face of emergencies and the growing gap between the rich and poor. Canadian Presbyterians have responded overwhelmingly to emergency relief while remaining committed to the community development work of PWS&D. In 2005, donations were $4,257,834 – almost double the previous year. Matching grants from the Canadian government made our ability to respond even greater.

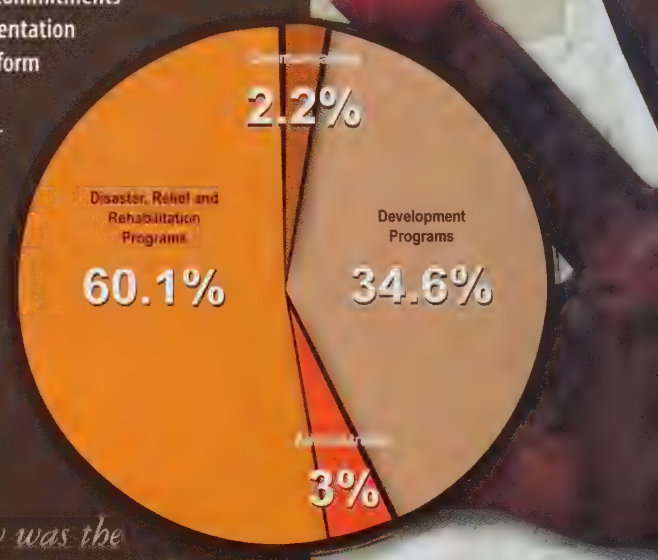
PWS&D worked hard to ensure that the response of Canadian Presbyterians reached people in need – often in areas and places overlooked by other agencies. An extensive CIDA evaluation of PWS&D in December 2005 observed the transformational work of PWS&D's development programs.

"The organizational *efficiency and effectiveness* of PWS&D has been maintained at a high level. A real effort is made to deliver a logical, well structured and well balanced international development program in the developing countries, as well as an effective education program in Canada. The dedicated staff and committee members and their continuing efforts and personal commitments give PWS&D direction in their implementation and support of projects that can transform the lives of a reasonable measured number of the poor, ill and underprivileged men, women, adolescents and children."

Your work through PWS&D is a living testament of the commission of Christ. May you see the light of Christ shine through this report.

Richard Fee, Director

In 2005 congregations and individuals also donated $1,307,861 in cash and grain to PWS&D's account at the **Canadian Foodgrains Bank**. With contributions from other CFGB members and matching grants from CIDA, PWS&D was the lead agency for programs worth over $5 million dollars in North Korea, Malawi, Nicaragua, and Tanzania. PWS&D also contributed food equity to programs in Liberia and Sudan.



How was the money spent?

Statement of Revenue and Expenditures

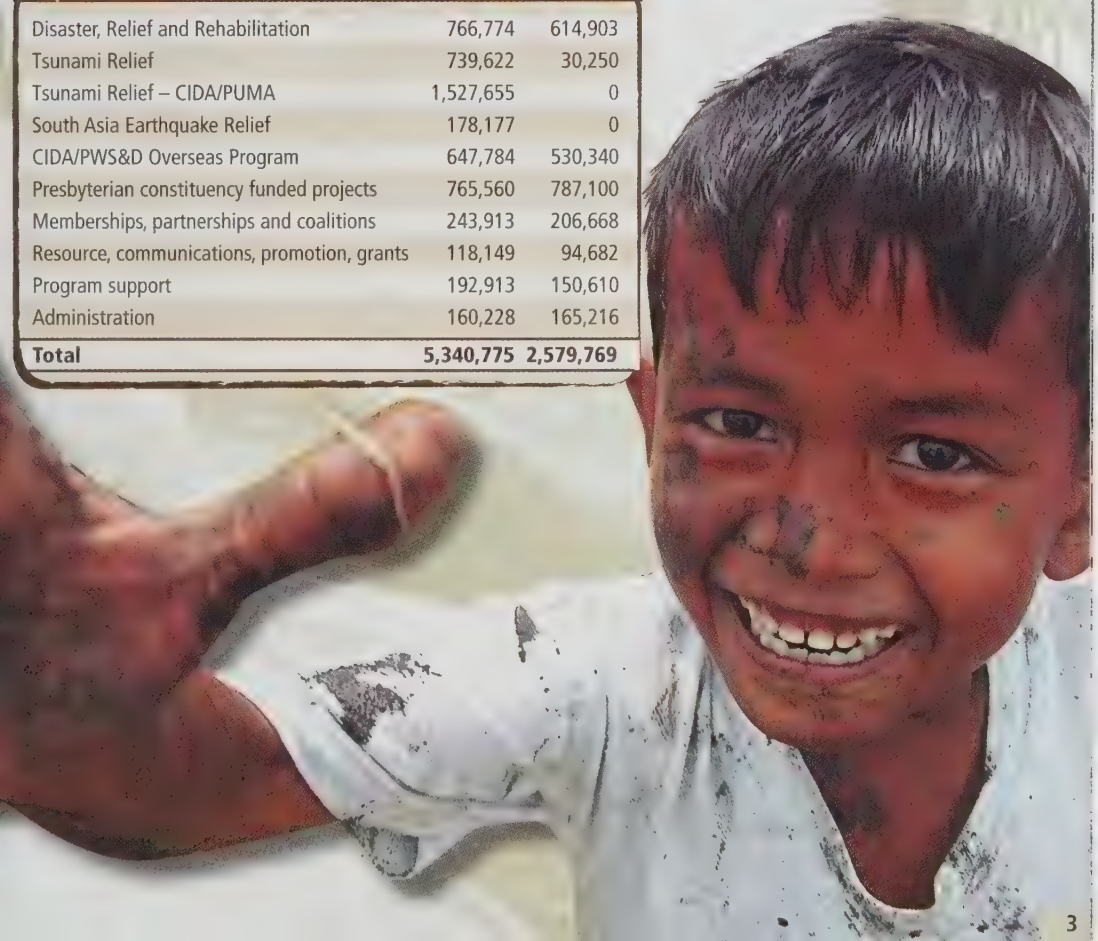
For the year ended December 31, 2005

Revenues	$2005	$2004
Undesignated contributions	1,262,129	1,183,556
Undesignated bequests	114,229	36,565
Designated contributions – projects	477,075	515,697
Designated contributions – emergency relief	1,095,519	589,985
Designated contributions – Tsunami relief*	1,223,017	127,506
Designated contributions – South Asia Earthquake relief*	200,094	0
Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)	398,000	398,000
Canadian International Development Agency – Tsunami (PUMA)**	1,500,000	0
Government of the Province of Saskatchewan	9,680	11,549
Other income (interest)	62,056	22,323
Total	**6,341,800**	**2,885,181**

* Donations to Tsunami Relief and South Asia Earthquake were eligible for matching funds from the Canadian Government. PWS&D worked ecumenically to access these funds which came in during 2005 and 2006.

** PWS&D programmed the matching funds from CIDA for the Presbyterian, United, Mennonite and Anglican churches' tsunami rehabilitation project. Another $4.5 million will come from CIDA during 2006 and 2007.

Expenditures	$2005	$2004
Disaster, Relief and Rehabilitation	766,774	614,903
Tsunami Relief	739,622	30,250
Tsunami Relief – CIDA/PUMA	1,527,655	0
South Asia Earthquake Relief	178,177	0
CIDA/PWS&D Overseas Program	647,784	530,340
Presbyterian constituency funded projects	765,560	787,100
Memberships, partnerships and coalitions	243,913	206,668
Resource, communications, promotion, grants	118,149	94,682
Program support	192,913	150,610
Administration	160,228	165,216
Total	**5,340,775**	**2,579,769**



PWS&D programs in emergency relief, food security, water and sanitation, health, income generation, education and HIV/AIDS have grown in scope and depth over the last year. PWS&D has maximized relief efforts by working cooperatively with other churches through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB) and Action by Churches Together (ACT). Matching funds from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) extend the impact of donations to PWS&D.

Towards a World Without AIDS

Churches continued to deepen their understanding and raise awareness in their communities about HIV and AIDS. By March 30, 2006 over $730,000 has been raised for the Towards a World Without AIDS Campaign, launched at the 130th General Assembly in 2004. PWS&D has been able to expand education, palliative care, home-based care and orphan programs in Malawi, Tanzania, Kenya, Nigeria and India. Churches were equipped to respond to the pandemic in their communities while working against stigma and discrimination. New programs are providing counselling and testing in rural and remote communities and are reducing the transmission of HIV from mother to child. We are also helping three Canadian partners raise awareness about HIV and AIDs among Aboriginal people and other Northern people in Canada.





Undesignated donations help PWS&D respond immediately to disasters and support innovative community development projects.



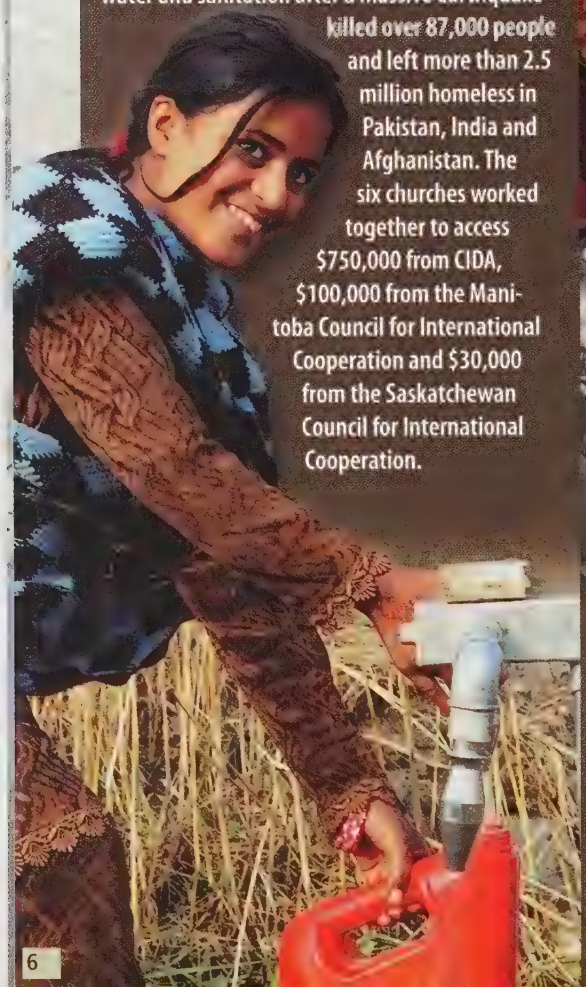
Tsunami

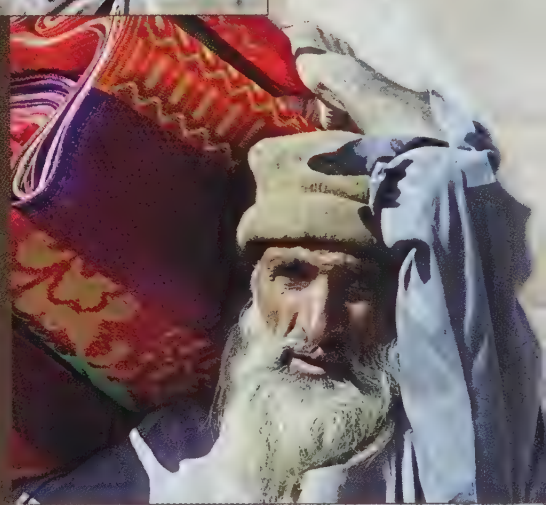
Individuals and congregations contributed more than $1.3 million to the Tsunami appeal – the largest response to an appeal in PWS&D history. PWS&D worked with the United, Mennonite and Anglican churches to access $6 million of matching funds from CIDA for ACT work in India. The Canadian churches committed an additional $3 million to the overall ACT appeal. Worldwide ACT raised over $84 million to respond in India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Somalia. With these funds food, clothing, bedding, kitchen utensils, and kerosene stoves were distributed to the displaced. Counseling programs helped people, particularly children, recover from the trauma. In 2005/2006 the work shifted to reconstruction with a focus on permanent housing, water and sanitation facilities and jobs and livelihoods. PWS&D plans to support reconstruction work until 2010.



South Asia Earthquake

Working with five other Canadian churches, PWS&D helped ACT provide winterized tents and shelter kits, traditional heaters, food packages, cooking utensils, winter clothing, medical services, water and sanitation after a massive earthquake killed over 87,000 people and left more than 2.5 million homeless in Pakistan, India and Afghanistan. The six churches worked together to access $750,000 from CIDA, $100,000 from the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation and $30,000 from the Saskatchewan Council for International Cooperation.







Hurricane Katrina

Hurricane Katrina was one of the most destructive hurricanes ever to hit the United States. PWS&D directed donations to the Presbyterian Church (USA) and Church World Service who targeted vulnerable people left out of the system. Congregational groups from Canada traveled to the region to help with the cleanup and reconstruction.

The **PWS&D Committee,** made up of representatives from different Synods and overseas partners, reviews and plans PWS&D relief and development programs, communication strategies and refugee sponsorship.



Darfur, Sudan

PWS&D continued to support the ACT and Caritas network in what the United Nations has described as "the world's worst humanitarian crisis." This joint effort has become one of the largest NGO relief operations in the region, providing basic shelter, household items, clean water, latrines, primary health care, and education for internally displaced persons and host communities.



Hurricane Stan

Hurricane Stan hit Central America just as crops were ready to harvest. Agriculture and housing were devastated. PWS&D partners in Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua provided food, clothing, water and sanitation, and housing to those affected.



Niger

Poor rains and swarms of locusts left 3.5 million people in Niger in a severe food crisis. PWS&D, through ACT, helped provide millet and milk powder, deliver animal fodder and salt blocks for livestock, and build cereal banks.



Tanzania

The Africa Inland Church (AICT) is working with farmers in Tanzania on organic farming techniques, sorghum production, seed and food storage. In 2005, PWS&D and AICT provided two shallow wells and one rain water tank in Kigwanhona community. Water committees were trained in how to maintain and operate the water pumps.



In 2005, PWS&D received $114,229 in **bequests** from individuals who helped share Christ's love around the world by naming PWS&D as a beneficiary in their estate.

Ghana

The Presbyterian Church of Ghana worked to train and educate people who are visually impaired, deaf, mute, or physically disabled. Advocacy and awareness-raising programs helped children integrate into the mainstream school system. Training in weaving, shoe repair and tailoring helped young 'differently-abled' people start their own businesses. Sustainable agricultural techniques were taught to farmers with disabilities, helping them raise animals and increase their crop yields. The PCG also worked to protect and support women who have been deemed 'witches'.



El Salvador

The Women's Research and Training Institute (IMU) inaugurated a school for training women in human rights. Managers and civil servants were trained on gender equity practices, which help improve women's employment opportunities. IMU continues to help women's groups deal with domestic violence – a pervasive problem in El Salvador. Income generation projects were expanded.



Mozambique

Through Cooperation Canada Mozambique PWS&D supported water and health programs and a savings and credit union for low income rural women. PWS&D's $40,000 contribution to the program received a 2:1 CIDA matching grant.





Kenya

The Presbyterian Church of East Africa's AIDS program continues to train volunteers who in turn educate others about HIV/AIDS. The Shauri Yako Support Centre provided housing and education for orphans and street children in Nyeri. Youth are equipped with leadership and employment skills, becoming effective members in their communities.



Nigeria

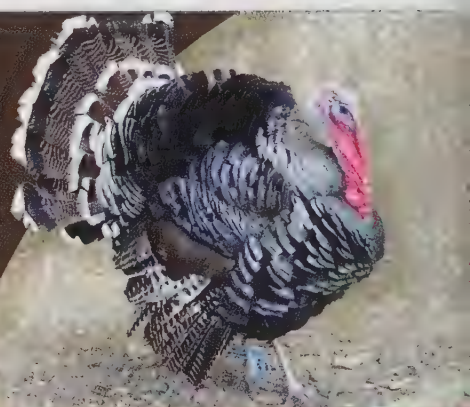
In addition to AIDS programs, PWS&D helped The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria encourage women to speak out and participate in politics. Women leaders are learning about governance and human rights issues and becoming involved by voting and seeking elected positions.

Malawi

In addition to many AIDS programs, PWS&D helped the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) provide critical food, seed and fertilizer to vulnerable families after the failure of the 2005 maize crop. The CCAP trained farmers in compost, agroforestry, crop diversification and animal husbandry practices. The promotion of legumes helped farmers improve soil fertility and nutrition. A grassroots empowerment project educated people about the Malawi Constitution, teaching them to work together to ensure that the government lives up to its responsibilities. Chigodi Women's Training Centre imparted leadership skills on many women and young girls, including a focus on HIV prevention.

Guatemala

The Fraternidad of Mayan Presbyterials helped Mayan women in very poor communities access primary education and trained community health educators. Revolving funds helped women acquire cattle, produce potatoes and other crops, and produce weavings and other crafts – with an emphasis on quality assurance – to improve individual's incomes. A tree planting campaign helped improve groundwater resources. The Centre for Integrated Studies and Community Development (CEIDEC) helped isolated communities on the Atlantic coast of Guatemala set up small gardens growing fruit and vegetables – improving incomes and family diets. Workshops on human rights are empowering indigenous communities to protect their lands and livelihoods.











While PWS&D raises funds separately from **Presbyterians Sharing**... these two funds of the Church work closely together. PWS&D sends funding for overseas partners' relief and development programs. Funds from **Presbyterians Sharing**... support PCC mission personnel seconded to overseas partners.

Nicaragua

The Centre for Life and Hope for Women and Children (CIVEMN) worked with children, youth and adults in a community where poverty, street gangs and crime levels are rampant. Quality education and activities in sports, dance, and music gave youth hope for the future. Training in sewing, hairdressing, tailoring and typing help youth to find jobs. The Institute for Human Promotion is working to protect and support young girls who have been victims of sexual abuse and are at risk of abuse in the markets. Soynica helps mothers ensure proper nutrition and development for children from birth to age three. The Asociación Cristiana de Jóvenes is providing cows for families who in turn provide the first calf to help other families. Through our membership in the CFGB, PWS&D is helping The Council of Protestant Churches of Nicaragua and Soynica work for food security with small-scale local farmers.







India

Church of North India community health volunteers helped deliver babies, made post-natal visits and treated thousands of cases of diarrhea, snake bites, measles, scabies and other diseases. The volunteers also worked to reduce poverty by helping families start kitchen gardens, improve agriculture and begin small businesses.

The Institute for Development Education (IFDE) and Roofs for the Roofless saw tremendous growth in self-help and micro-enterprise development groups. Over a thousand students benefited from night classes, significantly helping reduce the number of school dropouts. IFDE also helped many working children return to school. Roof's veterinary program helped reduce disease in cattle, improve breeds and provide goats to families on a revolving scheme.

Madurai Non-Formal Education Centre helped women understand their rights and the laws that





should protect them. Health camps helped families access basic medicines and learn about nutritious foods. HIV awareness and prevention were promoted and communities were educated to reduce the stigmatization of people living with HIV. Micro-credit opportunities helped double the income of many families and savings groups helped women free themselves from abusive money lenders.



Kairos

The $65,000 that PWS&D contributes to Kairos is matched by CIDA at a ratio of almost 3:1, supporting special projects in debt cancellation, international financial reform, ecologically sustainable economic development, just trade practices, conflict resolution, peace building and protection of human rights.

Get Involved

Consider making monthly donations to PWS&D to help us honour our commitments with southern partner.

PWS&D programs do not happen without the support of individuals and congregations. Every year congregations get involved through emergency appeals, special projects, educational workshops and worship services. Our partners continually express thanks for your prayers.

PWS&D staff and committee members continued to engage congregations by speaking on Sundays and at special events. PWS&D Sunday is the first Sunday in February. Resources from PWS&D help congregations integrate relief, development and refugee work into their worship services.

PWS&D is working with the The Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance against stigmatization and discrimination and for access to treatment for people living with





Donations can now safely be made on-line anytime at www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd/

HIV. The EAA's "Trade for People – Not People for Trade" campaign works to promote trade justice.

PWS&D supports TransFair Canada and the Maquilla Solidarity Network as practical ways to support sustainable development through fair trade. PWS&D urges congregations to find out more about their campaigns at www.transfair.ca and www.maquilasolidarity.org

Get Involved

Individual farmers, congregational donations and Canadian Foodgrains Bank growing projects helped provide food resources for PWS&D.

Exposure Tour Grants helped individuals and congregations learn first-hand about mission overseas. Recipients raise awareness about needs overseas and the work of the PCC when they return home.

In 2005-2006, the PCC approved 41 refugee sponsorship cases from six congregations across Canada. If all cases are successful, this will result in 63 new refugees coming to Canada from Ethiopia, Myanmar (Burma), Sierra Leone, Somalia, Eritrea, and Democratic Republic of Congo.

PWS&D worked with the Canadian Council for International Cooperation on the international "Make Poverty History" campaign involving 50 countries. PWS&D has joined leaders in the academic, literary, artistic and sports fields for this campaign.



Help us honour our commitments with southern partners.



Donations can be made safely on-line at www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd/





The Light
shines in the
darkness,
and the darkness
DID NOT
overcome it.

John 1:5



"Overall, PWS&D has developed a clear vision for its international development program... PWS&D has concentrated its development efforts strategically on community development, addressing specific sectors such as HIV/AIDS, nutrition, child protection, and private-sector development, with gender equality permeating almost every aspect of the actual activities."

Program Evaluation of PWS&D for the Canadian International Development Agency, December 2005

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pwsd@presbyterian.ca • www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd

Invisible we see you

The empty wild is filled with anticipation of something

BY NANCY L. COCKS



Waking up to wonder

A hand tapped me on the shoulder.

I turned around to face a smiling stranger.

"You're the girl who preached in Iona Abbey on Sunday," he said, nodding eagerly.

For a moment, I was taken aback. In Canada, someone might have recognized me but no one would have called me a girl! Yet, here I was, waiting to board a ferry to the Scottish mainland, miles from anywhere I could call home. I did not expect to be recognized, but the stranger was right. The previous Sunday I had preached in Iona Abbey for the first time. I hadn't anticipated what my role there might mean.

I found my tongue. "Yes, I am," I smiled.

We chatted as we walked up the ramp to the ferry. This man, an English tourist in his early seventies, had come to the Abbey as part of a bus tour. Buses from the mainland scheduled their Sunday morning trips across the Isle of Mull in order to drop passengers at the Iona ferry in time to make worship in the Abbey.

"I'm not much of a church-goer at home," he said. "But the Abbey is really something special."

Iona Abbey is truly something special. Steeped in centuries of history, it is surrounded by the stark beauty of the Isle of Iona. Lying off Scotland's west coast, Iona is a tiny island, three miles long and a mile and a half wide. Yet, for generations, it has been a place of Christian pilgrimage. These days it's also a popular bus tour destination. My brief encounter in that ferry queue began the reflections that led to this book. That day, I was just a few weeks into a contract position with The Iona Community, one of its full-time staff working in and around Iona Abbey. As a member of the resident staff, leading worship at the Abbey became a regular part of my activity. As one of the ordained ministers on the staff team, I often marvelled at the privilege of celebrating communion in that holy and historic space. My encounter with this eager stranger opened my eyes to the considerable responsibility which accompanied that privilege. Day by day and week by week, we invited constantly changing congregations of people from all over the world to engage the mystery of God's presence in worship. Neither staff member nor stranger could anticipate how any of us might be moved by our encounters in that special place.

"*Invisible we see you, Christ above us.*" These words come from a prayer written by George MacLeod, founder of The Iona Community. MacLeod had a marvellous way of weaving strands from Scotland's Celtic heritage into his provocative and political prayers. It was humbling to think that some of my words would join his within the invisible tapestry of prayer woven by generations of worshippers at the Abbey. So often we enter worship, aware of the broken threads and incomplete patterns in our own attempts to pull our lives together. Yet the longer I listened to guests and visitors on Iona reflecting on what happens in worship at the Abbey, the more I came to trust that God's Spirit would work with us there, no matter who we were or how we'd gotten there. Somehow we would be awakened to wonder. George MacLeod often referred to Iona as "a thin place" where "only a tissue paper" separates the material and spiritual worlds. The Spirit opens people's eyes in that holy place—not only to things we've never had the opportunity to see before, but also to things we have overlooked in our own lives. Above all, the Spirit awakens us to the invisible company of Christ.

Going through the motions

This sermon explores John 2:1-11, the story of Jesus turning water into wine to save a wedding from a crisis. On my mind were discussions we seemed to have every year among staff at a point when at least a few people found attending worship each day more of a burden than a gift. I was also struggling with a text that is often interpreted to present faith in Christ as an improvement on Jewish prayer and piety, an attitude that can contribute to Christian complicity in discrimination against Jewish people. Our heartfelt discussions suggested to me that an interpretation of this text ought to take into account what Christians themselves experience when something once fresh and provocative has become familiar and alienating.

This story of a crisis at a wedding
Is for any one who has ever felt, even
    for a little while,
that we were just going through the
    motions when it came to our faith.
If we've ever nodded off in a sermon,
stayed in bed on a rainy Sunday,
or lost heart or hope in God,
Jesus comes to the wedding in Cana
to wake us up by tossing his wine in
    our face.
180 gallons of it.
Jesus has arrived in the nick of time
to drench us in God's promise
that the good life is still waiting for us.
There is better wine in store than what
    we've tasted so far.

The cup of salvation is filled with abundant life,
if we will just allow ourselves to drink deeply of God's love.
This story is a challenging reminder
that our prayerful reflections,
our beautiful and dignified liturgies,
our familiar and steadying services—
all these are only preparations for the fullness of life.
And the fullness of life comes as a gift from Jesus Christ
to refresh our souls and make our hearts glad
so that we can live with commitment and purpose in
God's world.
But how are we going to claim the gift Jesus brings?

In this story, Mary gives us a clue.
She looks for Jesus and tells him what's gone wrong.
Then she challenges him to do something
and she expects him to make a difference.
If we are to follow Mary's lead,
first we have to consider what's going right—
and what's going wrong—
in us and around us.
It's important to name before God in worship the situation as
we know it.
Yet the situation will be a little different for each of us here
as well as for anyone we know who stayed home today.
Living with Christ is to drink deeply from the cup of salvation,
whatever situation we find ourselves in,
and to feel the warmth and energy of God's goodness deep in
our bones.

Jesus came to Cana as a sign
that life with God is a celebration of mercy and love;
it is a promise that fills us with hope and courage.
So for a moment
think about how you were feeling when you got out of bed,
while you were going through the motions of your morning.
Think about the last few days
or weeks
or years.
Be a little daring like Mary.
Offer your situation to Jesus.
Hold it up to him in your heart.
And believe that he is holding out his cup—
the cup of salvation—
with a gift that is meant for you.
Drink deeply of God's love and receive what you need,
whatever you need.
For God has more than enough love and life and laughter
to fill every thirsty soul.

Amazing Space

A guest hurried over to me one afternoon as I walked through the Abbey cloisters.

"Nancy, where did you get that sweatshirt with the picture of Iona Abbey? I've been looking for one in every shop on the island."

I paused to give her question some thought. I knew I didn't have a shirt with a picture of the Abbey on it. The guest could see my puzzled look.

"You had it on this morning," she said. "You know the one with the poem on the back."

A light dawned. And I began to laugh. "That shirt came from Saskatchewan."

Now it was the guest's turn to look puzzled. Saskatchewan is not one of the place names that Canada shares with Scotland!

"It's not the Abbey on the front of that shirt," I chuckled. "It's a grain elevator."

That someone could confuse a prairie grain elevator from the plains of Western Canada with Iona Abbey will make many of us laugh in disbelief. If you could see the image on my shirt, however, the mistake would be more understandable. In a washable reproduction of a lovely painting by Saskatchewan artist Henry Ripplinger, a road curves toward the tower of the grain elevator in a way reminiscent of the path approaching Iona Abbey. That tower is square with a peaked roof, rather like Iona Abbey's signature Benedictine design. But the most striking thing about this picture is the sky. The tower is set against the deep reds and oranges of sunset, made more glorious by fingers of indigo clouds reaching across the expansive horizon. A gorgeous prairie sunset. The kind of sunset that sweeps across Iona in the summertime to fill another expansive horizon and bathe the Abbey tower in its blessing.

Iona Abbey is not the only towered structure from which hungry souls are fed. As I reflect on this mistaken identity and think about what I've read between the lines at Iona Abbey, I am struck by a parallel with Jesus' life of prayer. Jesus sought out the wilderness, the emptiness of the desert, to enter the fullness of God's presence. With its barren hills and wide-open horizons, Iona offers that same paradoxical gift—the empty wild filled with anticipation of something, *someone* more than we can see. Perhaps this is what George MacLeod sensed when he spoke of Iona as a "thin" place where spiritual and material worlds touch. Yet, as much as I have come to love Iona and the Abbey, I also know God's breathtaking presence in the vast prairie wilderness I call home.

To be empty and full at the same time—a paradox of our encounters with God, wherever they happen. Only as we empty ourselves and pour out to God our deepest longing do we find God filling our souls with living water that seeps into the well from which we draw our daily lives. Paradox beats at the heart of Jesus' identity, that very earthy life in whom the holiness of God takes flesh. George MacLeod points us to this paradox in his prayer: "*Invisible we see you, Christ above us, Christ beneath us, Christ beside us.*" Only as we divest ourselves of what we expect Christ to look like are we given a glimpse of his surprising smile in eyes that meet ours—at our daily bus stop or in the exchange of his peace.

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The sound of invisible trumpets

Is The Presbyterian Church in Canada still in the wilderness?

BY JOSEPH MCLELLAND

"It's the theology, stupid!" What if it is? What if our diagnosis of the ills of the church—shrinking numbers and diminishing expectations, based on changes in social norms, charges of irrelevance and outdated sermons and liturgy and music—misses the heart of our problem: theology, doctrine, what we believe?

Looking back at the two addresses to the Toronto-Kingston Synod in 1965 (subtitled Forty Years in the Wilderness) recalls the comment of an older minister, "Joe, you can't be an angry young man all your life!" Well, I'm trying. The young part is easy, since Easter faith is a sort of youthening process that defies common wisdom about the perils of ageing. As for anger, I hope it's Aristotle's virtuous anger characteristic of the "good-tempered" person. Mine is tinged with regret at what might have been, if we had taken more fire from our past heritage and less of its ashes. Back then the issue was our narrow commitment to the Westminster Confession of Faith, making us only a confessional church, not a truly confessing church. That particular situation has been remedied, replaced by a broader allegiance, including WCF, and expressed in our fine new subordinate standard, Living Faith.

Now that another 40 years have passed since the old battles of 1925, what is the Spirit saying to the church today? And how do we discern any word from God among the strident claims of this post-modern age of technology and hedonism, when everything has become sexualized and trivialized? Can this be a New Age for the church too? Or are we facing a steady decline in membership as society turns to others for spirituality and meaning? In Denmark over a century ago, Kierkegaard thought of how the Gospel was being reduced to "a little moralizing and a few articles of faith," and said, "Good night, Christianity."

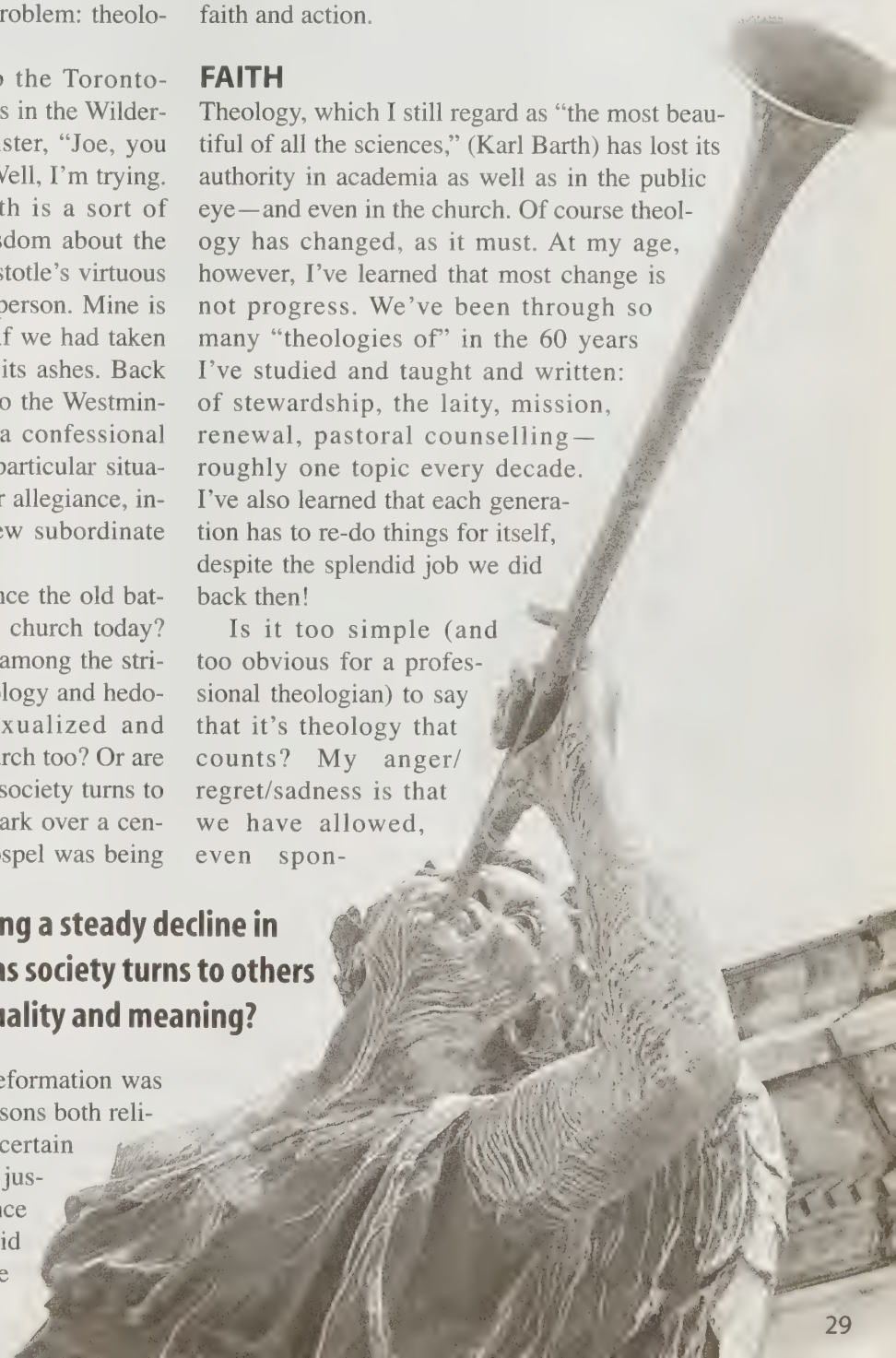
The Presbyterian and Reformed motto is "always reforming." That is, the 16th-century Reformation was a work in progress, not a finished fact. For reasons both religious and political, the Reformers selected certain concepts from late medieval theology, notably justification by faith and Christ's spiritual presence in the Eucharist, making them central. They did not re-open the doctrine of the Trinity or of the sacraments (particularly infant baptism, hardly a New Testament datum), or of a church without privileges. Our task now is to continue the Reformation. How? Let's look at the two chief items of that event, theology and good works, that is, faith and action.

FAITH

Theology, which I still regard as "the most beautiful of all the sciences," (Karl Barth) has lost its authority in academia as well as in the public eye—and even in the church. Of course theology has changed, as it must. At my age, however, I've learned that most change is not progress. We've been through so many "theologies of" in the 60 years I've studied and taught and written: of stewardship, the laity, mission, renewal, pastoral counselling—roughly one topic every decade. I've also learned that each generation has to re-do things for itself, despite the splendid job we did back then!

Is it too simple (and too obvious for a professional theologian) to say that it's theology that counts? My anger/regret/sadness is that we have allowed, even spon-

Are we facing a steady decline in membership as society turns to others for spirituality and meaning?



sored, fundamentalism, including the politicized form of the "righteous empire" to our south. We did this by neglecting good theology, watering it down for easy consumption by the laity. We preachers have sold them short, failing to communicate what we learned in seminary (the real fundamentals) and so failing to prepare for contemporary issues. Some examples:



Item: since Genesis 1 to 11 is religious mythology, not history or science, there can be no conflict between creation and evolution, or religion and science. (One tells us why, the other how).

Item: in face of religious pluralism and how others approach God, we need to fine-tune our doctrine of God. To say "Jesus is God/God is Jesus" is a heresy (named Apollinarian), common in our worship. It slanders the Lord's humanity. Trinitarian theology is tri-unity, stressing the unitarian equally with the trinitarian. Therefore we worship only GOD—through Jesus Christ by the Spirit.

Item: we must correct the "naïve supernaturalism" that pictures God as all-mighty, a kind of heavenly potentate or engineer, God of the gaps and the zaps. No wonder the "problem of evil" is insoluble. Most who think they are agnostics or atheists blame the presence of evil on God and so find it easy to reject the heavenly Tyrant. But bare omnipotence is "a theological mistake" (Hartshorne). It's modelled on the world of physics (the power of force), not the biblical story (the power of love). It fails to approach God through Jesus the Christ and so is sub-Christian. It wants God to serve us, as if God is ours to use rather than enjoy (Augustine, echoed in our Shorter Catechism). Thus bad theology makes for bad faith, as if Christian belief is merely irrational and therefore irrelevant to the quest for the meaning of our divine-human comedy.

Item: ministers of Word and Sacrament are called and trained to be primarily expositors of scripture, communicators and pastors. Not office managers or CEOs. Yes, we need specialists in Presbytery such as counsellors. Since the Presbyterian system of government is by definition a "team ministry" (minister with session, collegial presbyters, etc), why can't we put this to use in more practical ways in view of our problem with shrinking congregations? Calvin discerned four kinds of ministers in the Bible but we know this was largely arbitrary, so where's today's imagination?

Item: if we are again in a New Testament context—a small dissident group in an alien society—can we revive New Testament forms of gathering and witness? Cells or house churches to replace our underused sanctuaries (a bad word!), missionaries-at-large (a good word!) to replace our settled pastorates? And so on...

So we must test our theology: is it authentic, loyal to its foundation? Not whether it agrees with modern society, steeped as it is in self-love and violence and hedonistic indulgence. To quote myself, in an epilogue to a recent history of heartland Presbyterianism: "What shape Christianity will have in this complex world of pluralism, technology and media hype is anyone's guess. So far we seem bemused by it all, uncertain whether to join the in-crowd by dumbing down theology and jazzing up liturgy, or to hold fast to old truths and ways." (*No Small Jewel*, ed. John A. Johnston)

ACTION

Of course, living faith must issue in action ("ideas have legs"), especially on behalf of the poor and victimized—those groups identified by our Presbyterian World Service and Development. We have a special duty on behalf of justice for refugees, a world free of AIDS, peace among nations, equity in the workplace, and so on. But here's the question: is there one unique and distinctive work that only Christians perform? Are not all our good works shared by humanists, Jews, Buddhists and others? I know of no instance of purely Christian social action, one moral stance that cannot be duplicated elsewhere, including the Golden Rule, sacrifice for others, love and respect for the neighbour. Therefore the sole vocation we have, what C.S. Lewis meant by "mere Christianity," is to be "stewards of the mysteries of faith." That means witnesses to the Gospel. Here's the logic of faith: only a biblical theology can provide the church with its distinctive and unique character. This is the "one thing needful" as Christians. Otherwise we are saved by our works and betray both Gospel and Reformation.

Is this merely an old-fashioned complaint from a has-been lamenting the passing of the good old days? Surely the onus of proof is on those who are prepared to lose the essence of Gospel by turning to easier creeds or the busy-ness of church work, rather than attempt the difficult task of communicating our Good News "in the language and thought-forms of today" as the mandate of the Committee on Doctrine put it. After all, the Gospel is an alien Word driven into world history by three nails. If I am near right, the only claim we have to

exist as an institution is that we preserve and communicate the old Story that is always relevant, the most precious thing this world contains, and the source of authentic human being.

If we do not have a proper theology, we cannot meet the needs and challenges of today. Because the arena is the field of ideas: in science, political economy, global affairs, it is the clash of ideas that is making the world go round. If there is any Word of God, surely the Gospel is its essence, and amid the cacophony of warring voices this proclaims the prophetic-apostolic witness to a living God and a living faith. When I don my philosopher's cap I see that the trouble with Christianity is that it's a historical religion, and it hinges on a specific space-time event, the singularity we call Jesus of Nazareth. Personally, I'd rather have something easier, more noble than that bloody business, more aesthetic (like the calm death of Socrates, or the Buddha). But what can you do if that's the way God chose?

In his great poem *Brébeuf and his Brethren*, E.J. Pratt recounts the hardships and deprivations of the Jesuit missionaries and their final tortures, particularly that of Jean de Brébeuf. He asks, "Where was the source of his strength?" And answers:

In the sound of invisible
trumpets blowing
Around two slabs of board,
right-angled, hammered
By Roman nails and hung
on a Jewish hill.

Rev. Dr. Joseph Mclelland was a columnist for the Record from 1991–2003 (The Ivory Tower). He teaches a graduate seminar annually at McGill University and is Robert Professor Emeritus of The Presbyterian College, Montreal and McConnell Professor Emeritus of McGill University. He was moderator of General Assembly in1985.

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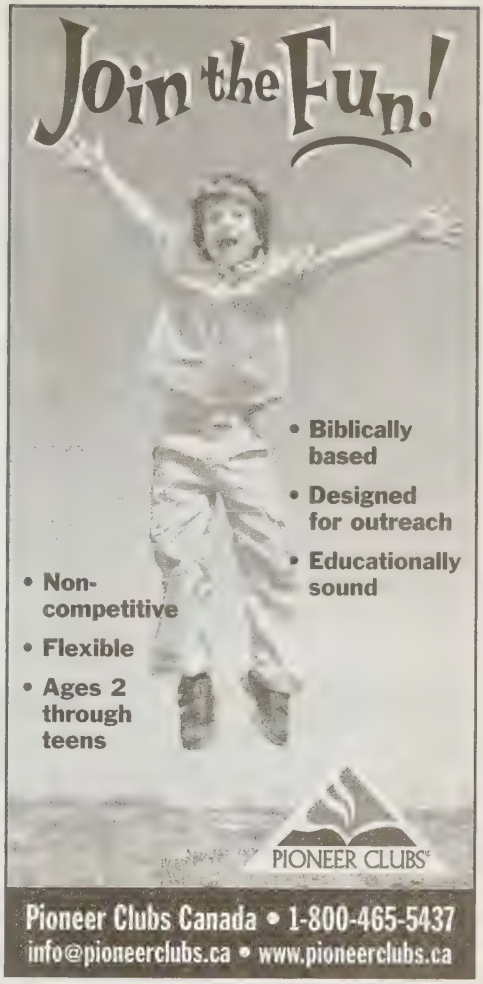
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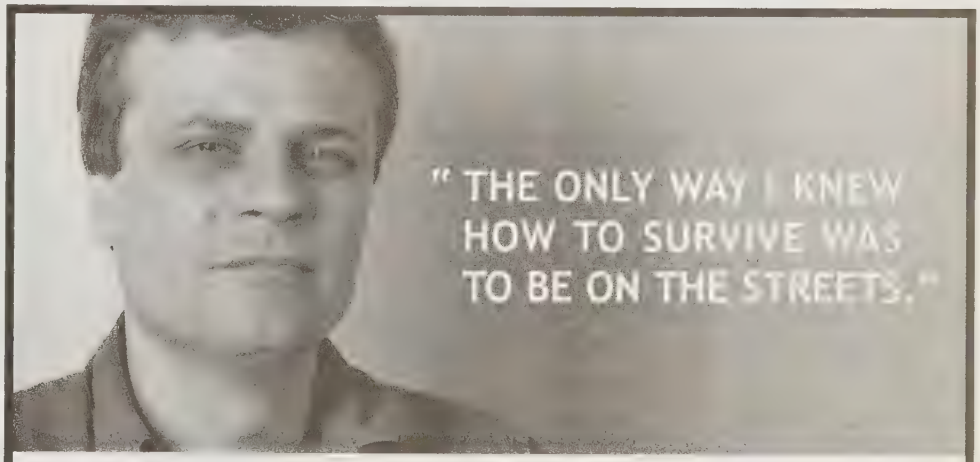
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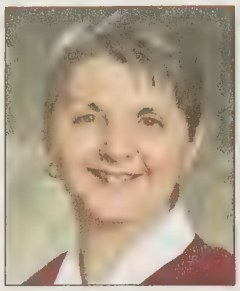
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CALLED TO WONDER ANSWERS (from page 46)

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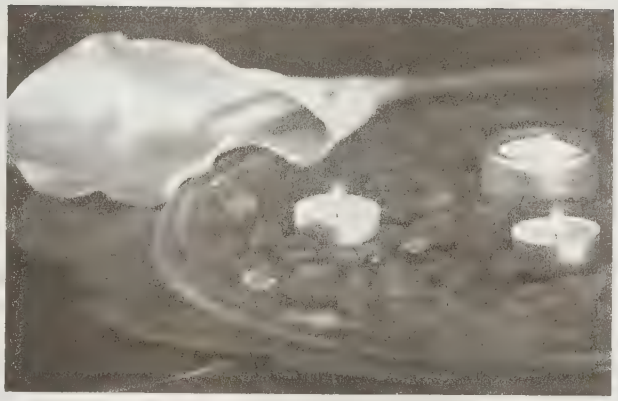
Time marches on

After the last sympathy card the days grow dark

BY GWYNETH WHILSMITH

Sympathy cards poured in after my husband died, some from people I didn't even know. The phone rang constantly, visitors were at the door and I felt surrounded by a cocoon of love and caring.

Time does march on, however. In a few weeks, the mail fell off to advertising flyers and bills, and phone calls dwindled away until a day could pass with no letters and scarcely a call.



You hear a funny story and you can't wait to hear him laugh—but there's no one there—just an empty chair

What happened? Did my friends suddenly forsake me? Of course not. But children and friends have lives of their own and, as it has to be, they gently retreated from my life, leaving me to find my own way through the grief and the newness of it all.

There is much that is new about fending for oneself. Art, a house builder, did the repair work around the house so we had no list of tradesmen. Despite that, I did manage to find a contractor to finish shingling the roof that my husband had started before he took sick. I also located a painter to paint the house and someone to look after the large yard.

It was the little tasks that almost did me in—things as simple as picking out the weeds along the sidewalk, fixing a leaking tap, knowing when to take the car in for a check-up and a hundred and one other small jobs.

I couldn't do many of them myself because a month after Art's death, I had to have surgery and while recovering, I tripped over the intravenous tube, fell and broke my hip. Recovery from the operation and hip replacement meant weeks away from home and when I finally returned to the empty house, home alone took on new meaning.

The absence of Art's presence was overwhelming but I also discovered how much I missed all the things he had looked after that I hardly noticed before. Most of all, I missed that he wasn't there to look after me. On rare occasions when I *was* sick, he took care of me, but now, when I really needed him, he was nowhere to be found. "Where are you?" I cried angrily as I limped through the silent house with my walker. "Where are you?"

Other bereaved spouses tell me they, too, find the hardest thing to bear is not having someone with whom to share. You hear a choice bit of news and want to rush home to tell; your granddaughter phones to tell you she's won a scholarship and you turn, expecting to see his proud grin; you hear a funny story and you can't wait to hear him laugh—but there's no one there—just an empty chair.

There are many adjustments and problems. Will I sell this house? If I do, where will I go? A condo, an apartment, a small house? Should I turn in the old car for a newer one? The questions go on relentlessly. Sometimes I think I hear Art's quiet chuckle, "Come on, Gwyn, use your head—it's not difficult."

Then, of course, there's God. I went from feeling so sheltered in His love right after Art's death to feeling dark despair when I was at my lowest ebb in the hospital. Self pity washed over me. "Let me die too."

I didn't die, however, but recovered from surgery, healing miraculously. It's true, the house still seemed dark and empty, but soon it was springtime with all its glory. My granddaughter helped me plant pots, a neighbour cleaned up all the accumulated winter mess on my lawn, the trees burst into leaf, the daffodils blossomed. It was good to be alive.

The dark days took on a different hue. There *was* light. I just hadn't seen it behind the black wall of depression. There were blessings to count by remembering all the good things I had going for me and no point sitting around feeling sorry for myself. I had to take charge and get some positive action going on in my life.

Of course, God hadn't abandoned me even though for a while He seemed so distant. But even Christ was overwhelmed by thoughts of abandonment by the end of his life, so surely we don't need to feel guilty.

The condolence cards stopped, the phone doesn't ring as often and I'm still lonely, but the road ahead looks brighter, because it's true, God sheds His light even in the darkest corners of our despair.

Gwyneth Whilsmith is a contributing editor to the Record. This is the second of two parts. For some additional resources on grieving by Evelyn Ball, please visit our website.

Purpose, meaning, integrity

New technologies allow us to transcend time and space to build hybrid communities

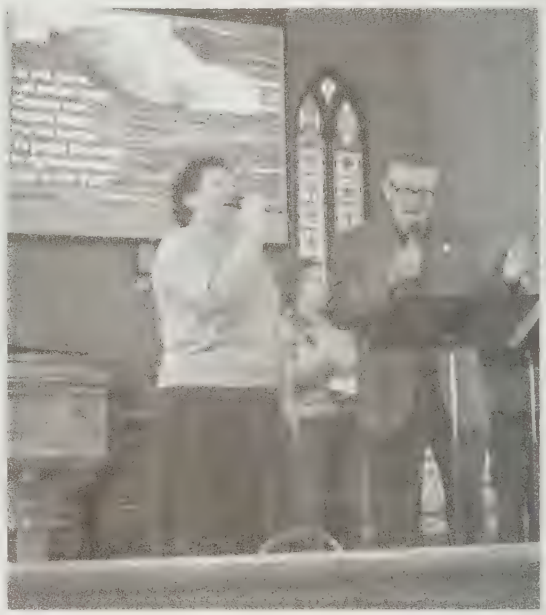
BY CHARLES FENSHAM

In a civilization that has lost the meaning of life the most important thing a Christian can do is to live … this life alone can break the illusions of the modern world …
– JACQUES ELLUL, *THE PRESENCE OF THE KINGDOM*

Perhaps one of the most important aspects of the Gospel of John is the powerful role that words play in demonstrating the Good News. It is fairly easy to be critical of our technological and consumer capitalist culture in Canada, it is less easy to know what it is to live in this culture faithful to the Gospel. How do we live with full life as Christian communities in the present? In this sense, Jacques Ellul, one of the most provocative cultural critics and reformed theologians of the 20th century, is right in challenging us simply to live. On the one hand the staggering complexity of the world with its plethora of choices and compromises can incapacitate us. On the other hand the radical invitation to turn to the reign of God that Jesus extended to his disciples was not for the faint of heart but rather an invitation to become a new authentic community in the face of challenges. Jesus' invitation to follow was an invitation to life in all its fullness. These ideas of life and fullness extended beyond the mere biological, they encompassed an understanding of purpose, meaning and integrity in relation to God. In English we try to capture this wide idea with the term eternal life. As we are reminded in John 14, it also is an invitation to be on the way, or the path that is described by the story of the personality and character of Jesus. As surprising as this may seem, this ancient idea and invitation distilled in our Christian scriptures, become relevant in the new digital world we inhabit.

Some aspects of our new digital connectedness move us back to the oral and visual world inhabited by Jesus, the disciples and of course the cultures of the Old Testament. New technologies always make us lose some important part of the Gospel but they can also bring gain. As we discover the shrinking of the limitations of time, space and personal presence, the biblical picture of the resurrected and glorified Christ, present with us through the Spirit, comes to mind. We are living in a time of unprecedented rediscovery of the work of the Holy Spirit. Like the interconnectedness and presence of the Holy Spirit that is not limited by time and space, so the interconnectedness of the digital world makes it possible for us to be in that angelic state of transcending our human bodily limitations. We might lose aspects of face-to-face community, but we also gain elements of transcendence, instant communication and the ability to connect from disparate parts of the globe and even space. If we are careful and wise we might build hybrid communities that include digital connectedness and visual dexterity while fostering full and meaningful life. We need to ask what our email lists, websites and interactive media are to achieve. How can we counter isolation and lack of authenticity and foster connection, life and deep, wise meaning?

Recently, when I participated in a contemporary culture service, we sang to music produced and projected as a music video with words streaming on the screen. As I looked around, few people sang along; they stood watching the performance of the video like we would television. Such media do take our participation away and make us passive observers. However, it does not need to be that way. The power of words and images on a screen could be used while inviting everyone to participate. We can tell the stories dear to our faith and recorded in our scriptures in new and creative ways. What we need is not slavish imitation of the mass media, but creative and wise engagement for full life. Let us start by living. Let us live by creating authentic relationships. Let us challenge wisely the consumer pressure around us. Let us live by harnessing technology for the good of God's creation. Let us live by following The Way in our own imperfect stumbling mode …



Raising a joyful noise, at Streetsville, Ont., the old fashioned way, with a little help from new technologies.

Charles Fensham is Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology at Knox College, Toronto. This is the last of three articles on new technologies and the church.

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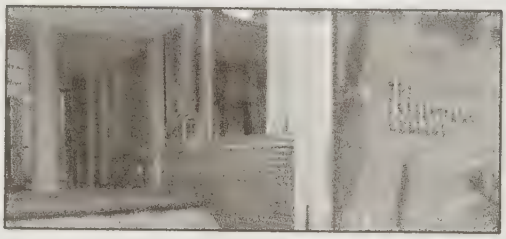
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One more stroll in the grass

A son glimpses God while watching his father slowly fall asleep

The night before you crossed the River Jordan, we crowded your bed and sang the hymns you loved to hear. Twice you took my daughter's hand and tried to raise it to your lips. When at last you succeeded in kissing it, she began to weep from sadness and joy and the delight of another memory she'd carry for life.

When I was a lad, I loved to sneak up on you and watch what you were doing when you didn't know I was there. That's when you became my hero, I suppose.

When you thought no one was watching I learned to laugh. I saw you smack your thumb with a hammer once and I held my breath. You danced around using strong language like, "Oh shoot!" Then you snickered. If anyone had reason to cuss it was you.

When you thought no one was watching I learned what was worth chasing. You avoided the deceptive staircase promising success, investing in memories instead. You never owned a new car, but scrounged to buy tent trailers for family vacations. You blew money on ice cream so we'd stay at the table longer. You bought flowers for my mother and gifts for my children. Watching your life, I learned that simplicity is the opposite of simple-mindedness, that those who win the rat race are still rats. Going through your dresser last night, I found your glasses, heart pills and a reading lamp. I suspect you're doing fine without them. In a file marked Will you'd misplaced a note Mom gave you listing your attributes. She made you sound like Father Teresa. "On time for work. A gentleman. Filled with integrity. Wholesome in speech. Loves family. Loves God." I guess it was filed correctly. It's the best inheritance a child could hope for.



When you thought no one was watching I learned how to die. With relationships intact, with nothing left unsaid

When you thought no one was watching I learned how to bring God's Word to life. Hours before you passed away I had you to myself. You were struggling to breathe and my singing didn't help, so I told you I loved you and thanked you for being a good dad. Then I opened the same old King James Bible I watched you read when I was a boy. You'd underlined some glorious verses in Revelation 21 and I read them to you nice and loud, of that place where our tears will be wiped dry and our question marks straightened into exclamation points. By the time I reached the promise that your name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life, you were sound asleep. Friday morning the sun rose on your face and you simply stopped breathing. No more tears. No more Alzheimer's. Home free.

You'll be glad to know your granddaughter Elena braided your comb-over like she'd done a hundred times before. We sat by your bedside and your daughter Ruth said, "Do you suppose he's saved?" And we laughed way too loud—from the deep assurance that you're with Jesus. Someone said, "I'm sorry you lost your dad," and I said, "Thank you, but I haven't lost him. I know exactly where he is."

When you thought no one was watching I learned how to die. With relationships intact, with nothing left unsaid.

Four of your five children were there. When we went to tell Mom of your passing, Tim asked, "Do you know why we're here?" "Money?" said your wife of 62 years. You'd have been proud of her.

She held your hand then, clinging to the last of your warmth. For the longest time she didn't say anything, just stared out the window. I asked what she was thinking and she smiled. "I'd like to take one more stroll in the grass with him." Wouldn't we all? When they came to take you away, she simply said, "Thanks for all the years, sweetheart."

I'd like to thank you too.

Thanks for hunting trips and fishing lessons. Thanks for majoring on the majors. And for a thousand timeless memories. Most of all, thanks for giving me a glimpse of what God looks like.

Tonight I'll lay flowers on your grave once again and past the tears I'll determine to keep that twinkle alive. To live so the preacher won't have to lie at my funeral. As you cheer me on, all the way Home.

Phil Callaway is an award-winning author and popular speaker. Visit him online at www.philcallaway.com.

A real piece of divine work

What God wants to happen is a done deal and has nothing to do with our expectations

BY DAVID WEBBER



When I was about seven I befriended a huge brilliantly colored black and orange caterpillar. It looked like a lively fat jujube with hair. Grandma told me it would change into a butterfly. I could just imagine how big, beautiful and brilliantly coloured a butterfly it would be. With Grandma's help and the aid of a gallon pickle jar, I soon had a terrarium with the caterpillar suitably ensconced. Grandma talked me into keeping the thing in our screened porch instead of the bedroom I shared with my teenage aunt, who if memory serves me correctly, wasn't that keen on bugs and spiders.

First thing every morning and several times during the day, I would hightail it onto the porch to see what had developed. I couldn't wait to see what kind of beautiful butterfly would lively dance from the impressive larva I had found. Eventually the colorful jujube with hair became a large dead looking cocoon. Undaunted I continued my frequent daily observations, even though the cocoon just lay there attached to a twig looking as dead as dried grass. I soon lost patience and hope. There was no way that the ugly cocoon thing was still alive, let alone going to change into anything beautiful. One morning, there was the flapping of wings in the jar. Jubilant, I ran to peek in. I was deeply disappointed with what I saw. It turned out that the big, brilliantly coloured, black and orange caterpillar that looked like a lively fat jujube with hair wasn't a big, brilliantly coloured, beautiful butterfly at all. It turned out to be just a fat, lumbering, nondescript ugly brown moth. The caterpillar didn't turn out they way I wanted it to. Disgusted, I took the top off the pickle jar and shook the moth out into the air. I had just learned two hard facts of life about metamorphosis.

Metamorphosis means a total change from within. Metamorphosis is from the same Greek word used in the Bible by Paul, when after he has urged the Romans to present their whole selves as an offering to God for God to work on. He writes, "Do not conform yourselves to the standards of this world, but let God transform you inwardly by a complete change of your mind." (Romans 12: 2) "Let God perform a metamorphosis, a complete transformation from within."

I can almost hear one Roman talking to another after receiving Paul's letter. "That Julius is a real piece of work. You know if anyone ever needed to be changed he does. But you know what? Julius just continues to go from foolishness to foolishness, from ridiculous to sublime, from dumb to dumber. His life just looks like so much dead grass to me and I don't see any hope that he will ever change." The first hard fact of life with regards to metamorphosis, especially one wrought by God, is that the change that is happening happens within. It happens beyond the sight of all the hangers-on offering commentary. What looks like so much dead grass on the outside of a person's life; all the foolish, ridiculous, dumb and aggravating stuff; is usually cocooning the work of God on the inside. After all, who knows a person's heart and what is going on there? The attitude of all the Jobish hangers-on best not be commentary or judgement but rather love and support, such as the kind Paul offered his friends in Philippi: "I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ." (Philippians 1:6)

I can hear another Roman conversation too. "Man, oh man, that Cassius is a real piece of work. He sure needs to be

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'Do not conform yourselves to the standards of this world, but let God transform you inwardly by a complete change of your mind ... Let God perform a metamorphosis, a complete transformation from within'

changed by God. He needs to ... (and a list follows)." But the second hard fact of life with regards to metamorphosis, especially one wrought by God, is that those standing around observing don't get to have any input into the outcome. Fellow Christians often have way too many opinions about what sanctified Sally and transformed Tom ought to be like. Who knows the heart of God and what He wants his new creation to be like? If the clay doesn't get to tell the potter what to make of it, surely the other cracked pots on the shelf have even less say. The attitude of a fellow Christian best imitates Paul, who looked upon his siblings in Christ with faith. Rather than having expectation of how his fellow Christians would be changed, he approached them as already changed. In fact, he looked at his fellow Christians in the same spirit as he looked at Christ: "No longer, then, do we judge anyone by human standards. Even if at one time we judged Christ according to human standards, we no longer do so. Anyone who is joined to Christ is a new being; the old is gone, the new has come." (2 Corinthians 5: 16a-17)

I write this in the face of all the despicable, appalling (and I would argue satanic) habits that fellow Christians seem to have of talking about others behind their backs and sometimes disparagingly to their face. This judgemental habit, it seems to me, has developed into a new art form amongst us Christians today. Surely Paul could have done the same thing. What does he do instead? He has confidence in God; that God is at work behind the scenes completing what he has begun in another's life. He approaches other Christians, not with his own expectations of what needs to happen in their lives, but with faith that what God wants to happen is as a done deal. A fellow Christian is already a new creation, a real piece of divine work. What would our churches be like if each one of us were confident that the other was a real piece of divine work rather than just a real piece of work? What would our churches be like if we approached each other with faith rather than expectation? William Willimon writes, "Someone who comes on board with Jesus is someone who's empowered, washed, cleaned up, dead and buried, raised, adopted—the images are all baptismal." What would our churches be like if we really treated each other like the washed rather than the great unwashed?

Rev. David Webber is a contributing editor to the *Record*. He is a minister of the Cariboo, B.C. house church ministry. His most recent book is *Like a Winter's Aspen: Embracing the Creator's Fire.*

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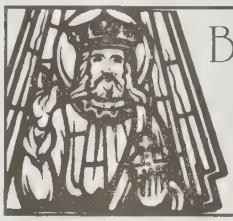
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LEITH, Jeanne Marie, after a brief illness on February 20, 2006. A life-long member of Duff Church (Largie), Dutton, Ont., Jeanne was active and involved in the congregation and sang in the choir for many years. She is survived by her mother Nina, daughter Barbara and son Archie as well as five grandchildren. Throughout her life time she remained faithful to her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and will be greatly missed for her care and love for others. "Yet I am always with you ... You hold me by my right hand. You guide me with Your counsel, and afterward You will take me into glory." Psalm 73.

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MACLEAN, Ross Nelson ("Larry"), died April 15, 2006 after a short battle with cancer, in his 72nd year. Born in Tilley, N.B., Larry was a long-time resident of Halifax. He held three consecutive church positions, the last being organist and director of music at The Presbyterian Church of Saint David for nearly 45 years. He studied first under Harold Hamer and later with Maitland Farmer, under whom he gained the ARCT, FTCL and ARCCO diplomas. Further studies followed in London, England under Dr. Harry Gabb at Her Majesty's Chapel Royal, St. James Palace and at St. Paul's Cathedral. He was chosen for master classes at Westminster Choir College, Princeton, New Jersey, under Joan Lippincott and Dr. George Markey, New York. He was a private pupil of the celebrated composer and organist Marcel Dupre of Saint-Sulpice, Paris and of Sir William McKie of Westminster Abbey, London. He was also a private pupil of Graham Steed, Halifax, under whom he gained the ARCO. He is survived by sisters, Juanita Branka, Detroit, Michigan; Irma Irving, Perth Andover, N.B.; cousin, Carolyn Barrett, Truro, N.S.; and friend of 42 years Cecil G. Publicover. A service of celebration for Larry's life was held in The Presbyterian Church of Saint David on April 21, Reverend Dr. D. Laurence DeWolfe officiating.

MACLEOD, Marie Hope (nee Winters), aged 77 of R.R. 1 Embro, Ont., passed away surrounded by her family at Stratford General Hospital on December 28, 2005. Marie was born in Bayham Twp., Elgin County on October 30, 1928, a daughter of the late Harry Winters and the former Evelyn Hardwick. Marie taught school for many years and she and her husband Bruce farmed for the past 50 years. Marie was an active member of Knox Presbyterian Church in Harrington, Ont., where she had recently been awarded an Honorary Membership in the Women's Missionary Society. Marie is survived by her loving husband, Bruce MacLeod, whom she married 50 years ago at Grace United Church in St. Thomas, Ont., on August 27, 1955. She will be deeply missed by her children, Debbie and husband Gary Matheson of R.R. 3 Embro; Brian and wife MarLynn MacLeod of Ohio; Dianne MacLeod of Stratford; her cherished grandchildren Gregory, Ryan, Andrew and Kurtis Matheson, Shayna MacLeod as well as Ashley, Sierra and Eli Marshall; and her sister Shirley and husband Garth Olde of North Carolina. She will be sadly missed by all of her family and friends.

RAMSAY, Rev. Allison, aged 83 passed away February 23, 2006. Allison became a candidate for ministry from Tyne Valley Presbyterian Church, Tyne Valley, P.E.I. He served the congregations of Westport, Ont., Montague and Cardigan, P.E.I., Lucknow and South Kinloss, Ont. retiring in 1989. Lovingly remembered by his wife, Priscilla (Millar) Ramsay, five sons and two daughters.

REEVE, Olive, aged 86 and a long time member of First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont.

SUMMERS, Bruce, aged 76, peacefully at Oshawa Hospital on March 2, 2006. Loving husband of Gwen Jarvis for 52 years. Longtime elder in the Presbyterian Church, most recently Burns Church, Ashburn, Ont. Bruce was a diligent elder in caring for his district, the sick and the needy. Love of family and friends and a deep concern for the clergy were marks of a devoted Christian named Bruce. A man of faith and compassion who lived by Jesus' commission—Love God with all you are and love and serve others. A celebration of Bruce's life conducted by Rev. Graeme Illman, minister of Bruce's home congregation Burns Church was held in St. Andrew Church, Ajax, Ont. on May 7, 2006 with an overflow congregation of family and friends.

Rate for obituary notices: $1 per word or $55 per column inch (the lower amount) plus GST.

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Warmth and readiness to share

The Presbytery of London combines the best of rural and city experiences

BY AMY MACLACHLAN

"We're excited about the future and to make room for people to come and worship and to come to Christ," said Rev. Sabrina Caldwell, associate minister at Oakridge, London, where nearly 600 people come to worship. The Presbytery of London's largest congregation, which already has two Sunday services and a contemporary Saturday evening service, is looking to expand its doors. "The more the merrier!"

This forward-reaching vibrancy is best exemplified by the presbytery's main website where congregations and service times, contact information, a brief description and individual website links are listed. Upcoming events, youth events, *Leading with Care* information, presbytery minutes and church growth resources can also be found there. According to Caldwell, who has been in the presbytery for more than 20 years, the dynamic within the presbytery changes as ministers come and go. "It's a presbytery where people are respectful of each other. There's often fellowship after presbytery meetings."

"People seem to be pretty close," said Chris Evans, presbytery clerk and elder at Elmwood Avenue, London. "There's a camaraderie between clergy and elders."

Of the presbytery's 24 charges, seven are multiple points for a total of 32 congregations. Only 10 of those are in London, with the remainder in smaller towns, quaint villages and farming communities. Hugh Appél, a retired minister now acting as supply at Argyle, Crinan, and Duff, Largie, sees the situation as grim. "There are healthy, strong congregations, but they're mostly in the city. But by and large, the smaller congregations are the majority and they're suffering."

Speaking of his own charge, Appel says, "I've learned that rural people are very loving. They really appreciate what you do and give a lot of support. Many people think the bigger the church, the better the church, but that's not always true."



New St. James', London, sent a mission team to Gulfport, Mississippi in March to help clean up after Hurricane Katrina devastated entire communities, including this church.

That openness is in evidence at Guthrie, Melbourne, where the website calls out to newcomers: "Whether you are new to the community or have been around for a long time, we would like to welcome you at Guthrie. We would like you to feel free to call upon our church at any time if you have any pastoral concerns or would like to get involved in the life of our church and community. If you have any ideas about how we can better minister to the needs of our community we would love to hear from you."

Despite their size the presbytery charges take their mission responsibilities seriously. At Dorchester (which is linked to South Nissouri), the Sunday school has penpal relationships with a Sunday school in Nunavut. Burns, Mosa, has a large youth group, two WMS groups and an active mission and outreach group that organizes fellowship and outreach activities each month. St. George's, London, is very active in supporting local AIDS initiatives and the national church's Towards a World Without AIDS campaign.

St. John's, Wardsville, "is a small church with a big heart," and its people love to sing. They offer a choir, a youth praise band and a men's quartette. St. John's, Port Stanley, is known as "the friendly church," and the relaxed atmosphere at St. Lawrence, London, empha-

PHOTO: WWW.NEWSTJAMES.COM/KATRINATEAM.HTML

The best deal in town

LIKE ALL OTHER PRESBYTERIES, London suffers the same challenges: as membership declines, churches close. Still, three of our churches are busting at the seams and another has hired a half-time minister. As a way to encourage more seam-busting and slow more declining, I have urged presbytery to start an Evangelism (Church Growth) Committee. Why bother with an evangelism committee? Because I believe the love and grace of God, who so loved us that he sent his sinless son to die on the cross so we can have a meaningful relationship with Him, is the best deal in town.

I believe our timing is critical. Folks everywhere are beginning to seek spiritual answers that promotions, prestige, money and consumerism haven't answered. We have a window of opportunity that exists right now!

The battles we face appear endless. Obstacles include contradictory opinions, cynicism, defeatism, fear of change, conflict and avoiding conflict. Each church challenge is unique and there is no magic one-two combination. Diverse realities include rural vs. urban, growing vs. dying communities, contemporary vs. traditional worship, minister vs. laity and minister vs. lay control.

But, great deals are not cheap and they require a lot of effort. – *Owen Thornton*

sizes great music (both contemporary and traditional), a strong sense of worship and meaningful outreach to the community. Knox, Fingal, is a small community church "known for its warmth and readiness to share the spiritual experience of our worship services." Knox, Kintyre, Knox, New Glasgow and St. John's, Rodney, is the presbytery's only three-point charge that works closely together by holding joint services and events. They are also active supporters of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. And at Chalmer's, London, Rev. John Bannerman lends his skating expertise to the Revs on Ice, a group of about 20 clergy from the Kitchener-London-Stratford area who meet once a week to play hockey and raise money for various charities. The presbytery as a whole has begun a campaign to deliver care packages to Presbyterian university students at the University of Western Ontario and Fanshawe College at Christmas. They are currently working on connecting these young people through a presbytery dinner.

Knox, St. Thomas, has been blessed with a strong music ministry that includes traditional, classical and Gospel music sung by a senior choir, junior choir, soloists, worship band and guest musicians. The congregation also supports a church in Kenya, holds an annual Kirkin' O' the Tartan service, and operates a library, which has become one of the most popular rooms at Knox.

New St. James', London, celebrated its 150th anniversary back in 1983. Today, it is active in outreach, having recently sent a mission team south to help with clean-up after Hurricane Katrina. Their pastoral care outreach involves regular visits to the elderly and house-bound members of the congregation.

The congregation at Westmount, London sells plants each year to raise money for the congregation, holds an annual pie drive to raise funds for local and global issues, and runs a library cafe that sells coffee, tea and homemade treats (with several thousand dollars in annual profits going to the library).

And there's always something going on at Elmwood, London, according to Chris Evans. Whether it's raising funds to dig a well in Malawi, buying cows for people in Guatemala, hosting community breakfasts that attract 60 to 70 people and a seniors' community centre that provides coffee and conversation, line dancing, crafts, Bible study, movies and cards, or the Help Elmwood Thrive committee which hosts fundraising events, spreads news throughout the community and holds monthly luncheons, Elmwood is always bustling with activity. "It's exciting to be a part of all of this," said Evans.

Oakridge, London, is also reaching out to youth. A high school is located next to the church, so the congregation hosts a weekly pizza lunch for the students, and allows them to skateboard on its property. A contemporary service on Saturday nights is tailored to a younger crowd, and they have a young adult group, and senior and junior high youth groups. "We have a desire to minister to youth who may not have been to church before," said Caldwell. "How do we bridge the gaps and how do we attract them?" A group of Oakridge's young people travelled to Trinidad last fall to encourage youth groups there, and did the same thing in Elliot Lake. A mixed group also recently returned from Ukraine.

Caldwell has seen a lot in her 20 years as part of this presbytery, and she admits there are challenges. "They're typical of any presbytery—small churches wanting to grow and looking for ways to do that. We've had some close, and some are going half-time as an option other than becoming a two-point charge. But how many part-time ministers can you attract? There have also been conflicts in congregations, and those take resources to sort out," she said. "But it's still exciting. Church growth is about mission, and often our local church is the mission."

OAKRIDGE CHOIR TOURS OTTAWA AND BRITAIN THIS SUMMER

The Oakridge, London Concert Choir is on tour to Ottawa in June, led by director of music, Janet Fischer, and with concert organist, Ian Sadler. They will perform at Christ Church Cathedral and St. Andrew's on June 10 and 11.

The choir will also be touring Britain from August 10-24, singing one Sunday in Coventry Cathedral, with a week of services as Choir-in-Residence at York Minster Cathedral, and concerts in Lincoln Cathedral and St. Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh.

The 78 members of the choir pay their own way to participate in this ministry. The choir previously toured Britain in 2003, singing in eight cathedrals. They regularly sing across southern Ontario and have produced three CDs.

To hear the choir and for more information about the tour please go to the *Record*'s website: www.presbyterianrecord.ca

Beneficial and heart-warming

A breakfast program seeks a way to do for Christ by doing for others

BY ANDREW CORNELL

It's -13 C on a Saturday morning and most streets in downtown Chatham, Ont., are quiet.

But the parking spots around First Presbyterian are taken and have been since 7 a.m., when a hardy group of cooks switched on the lights in the church basement.

A small group of people start to line up on the sidewalk outside the historic church just after 9 a.m., where a portable sidewalk sign advertises the breakfast outreach program. By the time the doors open at 9:15, a handful of hungry folks enter the warm, inviting basement.

It's been this way virtually every Saturday morning for the last four-and-a-half years.

A breakfast program had been talked about for a while at First. It began in October 2001 under the guidance of former assistant minister Rev. Ian MacDonald. Interest from a large bequest from a church member pays for groceries. A local farmer donates eggs. Local businesses occasionally chip in with food.

"We've never had to ask for cash," said Marg Swan, supervisor and cofounder of the outreach, which feeds about 95 people each week.

Nor do they hurt for volunteers. Approximately 15 people are needed to set up, cook, serve and clean each week. They're drawn from a loyal team of about 75 people—mostly church members, along with youth groups from other churches who assist on a rotating basis. Two shopping coordinators order the supplies each week, and several other volunteers do the shopping.

The program runs "on faith," said Bob Fletcher, who is also a cofounder.



Clayt Mifflin prepares pancakes for First, Chatham's breakfast outreach program.

"We never know how many will come on a Saturday morning, but we always prepare for the maximum."

The program's statement of purpose says "We show the love of Christ and share God's love ... by making it free and open to all who feel that they are in need of support and fellowship."

The church is in the heart of downtown, close to some of the city's poorest neighbourhoods. "We have the space, volunteers and willingness to work together. But it's not a way of filling the pews. Very few breakfast diners have actually shown up for church," Fletcher admitted.

Rev. Mike Maroney sees the program as "practical. It's something I can do directly to help people." He said it fulfills Matthew 25:45: "I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me."

The program has not only provided an opportunity to feed the poor and provide fellowship, it's also introduced many church members to the needs outside their circles. "It's a connection to people we wouldn't normally have," said Fletcher.

Like a big, extended family, many of the faces don't change. Absences are noted. So are new additions. "Five different babies have been born (to patrons) in the years since we started this," said Swan. Among them is Chantelle Rhan, four, who gives Swan a big toddler hug. She's there just about every week with her mother Connie Kellam, brother Christopher and sister Danielle. Across the room sit Kellam's mother and grandmother. "We stay all morning. It's a nice way to get out with the kids," said Kellam, who appears comfortable in the busy breakfast atmosphere.

Many diners stay long after their plates have been cleared. "We don't rush people out," said Fletcher. On a typical week, they might serve 250 cups of coffee, 50 cups of tea, 16 dozen sausage patties, 20 litres of milk, 27 pounds of home fried potatoes and 16 dozen eggs. The largest number of people fed on a single Saturday was 122.

But no one can count the smiles.

Kellam's children eagerly pitch in to clean up, gathering items off the tables. "The church people don't turn their noses up at you," said Kellam, who is grateful for the food and friendship. It brings a smile to Swan's face. "It's beneficial to them and heart-warming to me."

Andrew Cornell is assignment editor at *The Chatham Daily News* and a regular visitor to First, Chatham.

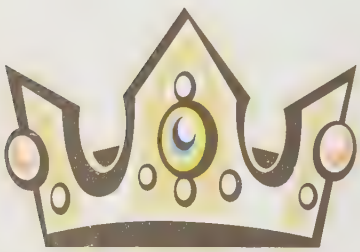
called to wonder

CREATED BY ERIN WALTON



Why do we celebrate Father's Day in June?

A war veteran, William Smart, found himself a widow when his wife died in childbirth. Mr. Smart raised his six children on a rural farm. His daughter, Sonora Louise Smart Dodd, wanted her father to know how much she appreciated his sacrifices and loving care. In 1909, she proposed Father's Day to be celebrated in June (the month her father was born). On June 19, 1910, the first Father's Day was celebrated. Eventually it became a national holiday to be celebrated on the third Sunday in June, all because of the love of one grateful daughter.



THE ROYAL TREATMENT

Has your father ever made you feel like a prince or princess? Why not make him feel like a king on this special day? You'll need a Bible, colourful stickers, and a 2x24-inch strip of yellow construction paper. Tape the ends of the paper strip together to form a crown. What kind of father might wear a crown like this?

Read 2 Galatians 4:4-7. According to these verses, who is our Heavenly Father? Let's make a special crown for our Heavenly Father. Put a sticker jewel on this crown for each thing in your life you want to thank God for (food, family etc.). On Father's Day, we give our fathers special presents. Give the crown to your Dad to make him feel like king for a day. What gifts can we give our Heavenly Father?

SACRIFICES

A sacrifice is made when someone gives up something for the good of someone else. Can you think of a sacrifice your father has made for you?

Read these wonderful Bible stories of fathers and the sacrifices they made for their children.

Abraham: Gen. 18:18,19
Isaac: Gen. 26:12,13
Joshua: Josh. 24:15
Job: Job 1:5

As children of God, we all have another Father in our lives— our Heavenly Father. Read John 3:16 to discover a huge sacrifice that He made for us.

FUN WITH WORDS: *ask your father for help!*

See how many words you can create using the letters in "Heavenly Father" and the letters in "Sacrifice". I found 30— see if you can do better! **Answers on page 34**.

FATHER'S DAY PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank you for loving us and giving us our fathers. Thank you for the sacrifices you have made for us. You're awesome and we praise you for making us your children.

Amen

To report a vacancy for the next issue of the Record please contact: Deborah Leader
Tel: 1-800-619-7301 x308 Fax: 416.441.2825 E-mail: dleader@presbyterian.ca
All notices of pulpit vacancies will be charged to the congregation: $8 a line, $40 minimum for a one-time insertion or $25 per insertion for four or more insertions.

Ministry Opportunities and Interim Moderators

New Church Development positions available through Canada Ministries; Contact Rev. Gordon Haynes, Associate Secretary; 416-441-1111 extension 258 for more details.

Synod of the Atlantic Provinces

Montague, St. Andrew's and Cardigan, St. Andrew's, PEI; Rev. Dr. Tom Hamilton, 19 Tamarack Ave., Charolettetown, PE C1A 6C2; 902-626-3268; hamilton@isn.net.

St. John's, Nfld.; St. David's; Interim Moderator David Sutherland, 98 Elizabeth Ave., St. John's, NL A1B 1R8; dsutherland@nf.sympatico.ca.

Sunny Corner Pastoral Charge, N.B.: St. Stephen's, Sunny Corner, St. Paul's, Warwick; Rev. H. Martyn Van Essen, 7 Hierlihy Rd., Tabusintac, NB E9H 1Y5; 506-779-1812; hmvanessen@hotmail.com.

Thorburn and Sutherland's River, N.S.; Union; Interim Moderator Rev. E. M. Iona MacLean, PO Box 1003, Pictou, NS B0K 1H0; ionamac@eastlink.ca.

Woodstock, St. Paul's New Interim Moderator Rev. Robert Adams, 1991 Hwy. 640, Hanwell, NB E3C 1Z5

Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario

Brockville, Ont.; First Presbyterian Church; Rev. Geoff Howard, Interim Moderator, 38 Elizabeth Dr., PO Box 440, Iroquois, ON K0E 1K0; 613-652-6215; gl.howard@sympatico.ca.

Howick, Georgetown, Que.; 1/2 time; Rev. Dr. Barry Mack, 496 Birch Ave., Saint-Lambert, QC J4P 2M8; 450-671-1862; standrews@standrews-stlambert.ca.

Inverness, Que., co-operative with the United Church, 3-point charge; a 3/4 time position and knowledge of French would be an asset; Rev. J. B. Forsyth, 585 Principale sud, Waterville, QC J0B 3H0; 819-837-1475; jbfor@netrevolution.com.

Maxwell, Moose Creek and St. Elmo, Ont., pastoral charge; 3/5 time; The Rev. Robert Martin, PO Box 41, Vankleek Hill, ON K0B 1R0; 613-678-2826; ruthandrobertmartin@sympatico.ca.

Montreal, Taiwanese Robert Campbell Memorial; Rev. Dr. Bill Klempa, 155 Lac Louisa Rd. N., Wentworth, QC J8H 3W8; 450-533-5321; wklemp@po-box.mcgill.ca.

Montreal, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Pierrefonds; Dr. J. Vissers, 3495 University St., Montreal, QC H3A 2A8; 514-288-5256 extension 201; jvissers@presbyteriancollege.ca.

Ottawa, St. Gile's; Rev. Andrew Johnston, Interim Moderator; St. Andrew's, 82 Kent St., Ottawa, ON K1P 5N9; 613-232-9042; aj@standrewsottawa.ca.

Pincourt, Que., Ile Perrot; Mark Farrell, 242 Fifth Ave., Pincourt, QC J7V 5L3; 514-453-4796; markim@ca.inter.net.

Vankleek Hill, Ont., Knox; Hawkesbury, Ont., St. Paul's; Rev. Ian MacMillan, RR 2, Cornwall, ON K6H 5R6; 613-931-2545; a3100@glen-net.ca.

Synod of Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda

Beeton, St. Andrew's; Rev. Jim Young, PO Box 312, Sutton, ON L0E 1R0; 905-722-3544; standrew@ils.net.

Belleville, St. Columba; Rev. Katherine McCloskey, PO Box 118, Stirling, ON K0K 3E0; 613-395-5006; katherinejonah@hotmail.com.

Dunedin, Knox; Half-time position; Rev. Robert Graham, Interim Moderator; 160 King St. South, Alliston, ON L9R 1B9; 705-435-5081; robert.graham1@sympatico.ca.

Georgetown, Knox and Limehouse, Limehouse; Interim Moderator The Rev. Wes Denyer, 44 Church St. E., Brampton, ON L6V 1G3; 905-451-1723; wesdenyer@rogers.com.

Milton, Knox; Rev. Harry Klassen, 3065 Cawthra Rd., Mississauga, ON L5A 2X4; dixiepc@bellnet.ca.

Oshawa, St. Luke's; Rev. Dennis Cook, 97 Burcher Rd., Ajax, ON L1S 2R3; dencook@rogers.com.

Penetanguishene, First; Rev. Peter Ruddell, Box A-180, RR 1, Coldwater, ON L0K 1E0; 705-686-3125; panddruddell@rogers.com.

Picton, St. Andrew's; Full-time minister; Interim Moderator Zander Dunn, Stella, ON K0H 2S0; 613-634-0465; zndunn@sympatico.ca.

Stayner, Jubilee; Sunnidale Corners, Zion; Rev. Keith Boyer; 27 Laurie Cres., Barrie, ON L4M 6C7; 705-735-9211; keb-cvb@sympatico.ca.

Thornhill, Thornhill Presbyterian; Rev. Barry Van Dusen, PO Box 264, Nobleton, ON L0G 1N0; 905-859-0843; barry.peggy.vandusen@sympatico.ca.

Toronto, Bridlewood; Rev. Graeme Illman, 765 Myrtle Rd. W., Ashburn, ON L0B1A0; 905-655-8509; InterimModerator@bridlewoodpc.ca.

God has called a new minister to:

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church
Windsor, Ontario

The situation presently is that the search team is diligently trying to locate that person to fill our vacant pulpit.
For amended profile, see www.standrewswindsor.ca
Interim Moderator The Rev. Scott McAndless
58 Erie Street South, Leamington, Ontario, N8H 3B1
519-326-4541 scottmcandless@sympatico.ca
If you are willing to explore whether or not you are the called person, please contact us!

PARISH NURSE

ARMOUR HEIGHTS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, located in North Toronto, seeks a parish nurse for 19 hours a week including Sunday service.

Requirements: current nursing licence, RNAO membership and insurance, preferably ICHM or McMaster parish nursing courses or commitment to do so.

Remuneration based on qualifications and experience.

Send a letter introducing yourself and a resume to

David Hobbs, 105 Wilson Ave, Toronto, ON, M5M 2Z9, or fax to 416-485-2304 by June 30.

For a fuller job description see www.armourheights.org.

Victoria-Royce Presbyterian Church

Our Purpose...
To glorify God by knowing Jesus and following Him.

Closing Service
Celebrating 121 years of witness in the Junction
Sunday June 25, 2006 at 3pm

190 Medland Street,
Toronto, Ontario
M6P 2N7

For more information contact
Doug Hain 416-239-7061
www.victoriaroyce.org

Toronto, Faith Community; Half time; Rev. Dr. Jim Czegledi, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, ON M3C 1J7; jczegledi@presbyterian.ca.
Toronto, Guildwood Community; Rev. J. P. Ian Morrison, 17 Earswick Dr., Scarborough, ON M1E 1C7; 416-265-0135; Ian.morrison@sympatico.ca.
Toronto, Patterson; Rev. Zoltan Vass, 439 Vaughan Rd, Toronto, ON M6C 2P1; 416-656-1342.
Toronto, St. Andrew's, Humber Heights; Rev. Garth Wilson, 155 Wychwood Ave., Toronto, ON M6C 2T1.
Toronto, St. Timothy's; Associate minister for English Service; Dr. Calvin Kim, B2-78 Finch Ave. E., North York, ON M2N 7J5; Tel. 416-229-0599; Fax (during business hours): 416-229-0594; sttimprez@yahoo.com.
Trenton, St. Andrew's; Rev. Job van Hartingsveldt, 244 McMahon Ave., Kingston, ON K7M 3H2; 613-542-5579; strapark@kos.net.
Uxbridge, St. Andrew's-Chalmers; Rev. Duncan Cameron; 115 St. Andrews Rd, Scarborough, ON M1P 4N2; 416-438-4370; scarboroughpc@allstream.net.
Warkworth, St. Andrew's; Hastings, St. Andrew's; Rev. Rylan Montgomery, PO Box 328, Colborne, ON K0K 1S0; 613-475-4675; rylan.montgomery@gmail.ca.
Waterloo, Waterloo North; Rev. Calvin Brown; 5 Linda Dr., Cambridge, ON N3C 3W5; 519-651-2232; cbbrown@rogers.com
West Toronto Presbytery, Albion Gardens; 2/3 time minister; Rev. Bob Sim; 416-812-8754; revbob@mimicochurch.ca.

Synod of Southwestern Ontario

Chesley, Geneva Church; Rev. Dr. Alex McCombie, RR 3, Chesley, ON N0G 1L0; Phone: 519-363-5392; Fax: 519-363-0975.
Cromarty, Cromarty Presbyterian Church & Hibbert United Church (an ecumenical two-point charge); Interim Moderator Rev. Gwen Brown, PO Box 2418, Exeter, ON N0M 1S7; 519-235-3701; kintail@tcc.on.ca.
Dundalk, Erskine and Swinton Park, St. Andrew's; Interim Moderator, Rev. Jim Johnson, PO Box 256, Durham, ON N0G 1R0; 519-369-2181; d.p.c@sympatico.ca.
Embro, Knox; Harrington, Knox; Interim Moderator, Rev. Chris Little, PO Box 99, Innerkip, ON N0J 1M0; 519-469-3904; innpresb@execulink.com.
Glencoe, St. John's Wardsville; The Rev. Kate Ballagh-Steeper, 1659 Attawandaron Rd., London, ON N6G 3M5; 519-473-1287.
Goderich, Knox Presbyterian Church; The Rev. Peter Bush, PO Box 235, Mitchell, ON N0K 1N0; knoxmit@quadro.net.
Hamilton, Central; Full-time minister; The Rev. Harry J. Bradley, Interim Moderator, 165 Charlton Ave. W., Hamilton, ON L8P 2C8; 905-549-8053; hjbradley@mountaincable.net.
Hamilton, Chalmers; Robert Geddes, South Gate Presbyterian Church, 120 Clarendon Ave., Hamilton, ON L9A 3A5; 905-385-7444; bobgeddes@mountaincable.net.
Hamilton, St. John and St. Andrew; Hamilton, St. David's; Rev. Clive W. Simpson, 19 Tisdale St. N., Hamilton, ON L8L 8A7; 905-709-6004; clive.simpson@sympatico.ca.
London, Dayspring; Half-time; Rev. Gloria Langlois, 225 College St., Belmont, ON N0L 1B0; 519-644-1765; glorialanglois@rogers.com.
London, New St. James'; Interim Moderator, The Rev. Keith McKee, 1475 Dundas St., London, ON N5W 3B8; stgeorge@execulink.com.
Niagara Falls, Drummond Hill Presbyterian Church; Interim Moderator Rev. Dr. Doug Robinson, 24 Clairmont St., Thorold, ON L2V 1R3; 905-227-4844 or 905-227-9450; robinson@vaxxine.com.
Paris, Paris Presbyterian Church; Rev. John Cruickshank, 85 Mann Ave., Simcoe, ON N3Y 5K4; 519-428-3156.
Port Elgin, Tolmie Presbyterian Church and Burgoyne, Knox; Rev. Bill Vanderstelt, PO Box 280, Chatsworth, ON N0H 1G0; 519-794-0155; bvanderstelt@hotmail.com.
Thornbury, St. Paul's; Rev. Scott Sinclair, 865 2nd Ave. W., Owen Sound, ON N4K 4M6; scott_staos@on.aibn.com.
Windsor, Chinese Church; Half-time, Cantonese-speaking; Wendy Paterson, 3200 Woodland, Windsor, ON N9E 1Z5; 519-972-3627; paulinmemorial@on.aibn.com.
Windsor, St. Andrew's; Full-time minister; The Rev. Scott McAndless, Interim Moderator, c/o Knox Presbyterian Church, 58 Erie St. South, Leamington, ON N8H 3B1; 519-326-4541; scottmcandless@sympatico.ca.

Presbyterian World Service & Development and International Ministries

is seeking persons willing to take part in the World Council of Churches Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI).

The EAPPI mission is to accompany Palestinians and Israelis in their non-violent actions and concerted advocacy efforts to end the occupation. Participants of EAPPI are monitoring and reporting violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, offering protection through non-violent presence, engaging in public policy advocacy and standing in solidarity with the churches and all those struggling against the occupation.

Since August 2002 accompaniers have come from more than 30 churches and ecumenical partners in 14 countries: Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK and the USA.

EAPPI accompaniers should be:

- 25 years of age or older
- Knowledgeable of and/or interested in the Middle East region and the Israeli/Palestinian conflict
- Committed to continue advocacy work upon return to home country including participation in public speaking

This program is designed for a minimum of a three-month period; expenses are covered by the church.

Interested persons are invited to send a letter along with their curriculum vitae to: The Director, PWS&D, 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, ON M3C 1J7 by: July 15, 2006

More details available upon request.

Youth Ministry Co-ordinator (12 hours/week)

for Chalmers Presbyterian Church, London, Ontario



Coordinator to plan, oversee and facilitate regular programming for junior and senior youth groups that allows the youth to explore and grow in their faith

Full job description at www.chalmerslondon.com

Forward resume: Youth Ministry Team, c/o Chalmers Presbyterian Church, 342 Pond Mills Rd., London, ON N5Z 3X5

Application deadline: June 1, 2006

Woodstock, Knox; Full-time Associate Minister; Rev. Mark Gaskin, 97 Wellington St., Brantford, ON N3T 2M1; Phone 519-752-4932; Fax 519-752-1846; cpc97@execulink.com.

Synod of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario

Winnipeg, St. James; Rev. Amy Campbell, 299 Olive St., Winnipeg, MB R3J 2X5; 204-831-5561; amethyst@mts.net.

Winnipeg, Westwood; Rev. Matthew Brough, Knox Presbyterian Church, 341 Eveline St., Selkirk, MB R1A 1M9; mcbroug@shaw.ca or Rev. Kevin Macdonald, St. John's Presbyterian Church, 251 Bannerman Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2W 0T8; mactamal@yahoo.co.uk.

Synod of Saskatchewan

Saskatoon, Circle West; Parkview; Rev. Annabelle Wallace, 436 Spadina Cres. E, Saskatoon, SK S7K 3G6; 306-242-0525; standrews@sasktel.net.

Synod of Alberta and the Northwest

Calgary, St. Andrew's; Associate Minister; Interim Moderator Rev. Ian Gray, Westminster Presbyterian Church, 290 Edgepark Bvld. N.W., Calgary, AB T3A 4H4; 403-241-1443; minister@wpchurch.net.

Calgary, St. Giles'; Search Committee, c/o St. Giles Presbyterian Church, 1102 23 Ave. NW, Calgary, AB T2M 1T7.

Edmonton, Strathcona Presbyterian Church, http://www.spchurch.ca; Interim Moderator Rev. Keith Humphrey, 8715 118 Ave., Edmonton, AB T5B 0T2; 780-477-8677; rvkrby@shaw.ca.

Lethbridge, Alta., St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church; Interim Moderator Rev. Frank Breisch, 1818 5th Ave. So, Lethbridge, AB T1J 0W6; andrewst@telusplanet.net.

Synod of British Columbia

Comox, Comox Valley Presbyterian Church; Interim Moderator Rev. Elizabeth Forrester, 2408 Glenayr Dr., Nanaimo, BC V9S 3R7; 250-751-1544; eamfor@telus.net.

Slocan Valley, St. Andrew's; Interim Moderator Rev. Dr. Leo E. Hughes; 250-226-7540; margrevleo@netidea.com.

Victoria, Chinese (bi-lingual, English/Cantonese); Rev. H. McNabb, 760 Latoria Rd., Victoria, BC V9C 3A4; hamcnabb@shaw.ca.

St. David's

St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador

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- Work with youth
- Equip members for Christian living
- Work with seniors
- Guide personal and spiritual development

Founded in 1775, the congregation is known for its friendly family atmosphere.

Please visit our website at:
http://www.stdavids.nf.ca/

Interim Moderator:
Rev. David Sutherland

P.O. Box 6206, St. John's, NL, Ca A1C 6J9
(709) 726-5385 Fx (709) 726-5740 Hm (709) 368-8609
standrew@nfld.com

WANTED
Carpenter's Helper

Experienced in Restoration, Renovation, Rehabilitation and Expansion.

We will consider a person willing to learn under the direct supervision of the Carpenter from Nazareth; a person ready to call people of all ages and all cultures to follow Him; a teacher in the worship of God and with the ability to show love in the full community in which we live. First Presbyterian Church, Brockville is seeking a minister who will prepare this historic church and its congregation for a great celebration of its two hundredth birthday. We need help to grow spiritually through Scripture-based teaching, children and teen programmes and music ministry. Should the Holy Spirit lead you to consider this work, please contact Interim Moderator Rev. Geoff Howard, 613-652-6215. gl.howard@sympatico.ca

Committed to creating a community in Christ and experiencing the journey of faith through fellowship

We are a community of faith
We are of the mind, heart and hands of Christ.
We strive to connect people of all generations through God's love
We are committed to our community
We welcome all to gather in Christian fellowship

First Presbyterian Church
Brockville, Ontario

At Paris Presbyterian Church in the heart of Southern Ontario you will be welcomed into a vibrant evangelical community.

- Our congregation enjoys strong biblical teaching and blended worship in a single Sunday celebration
- We have a variety of small groups for youth, ladies and men
- Many of our congregation participate in our outreach ministries
- Our children enjoy an active Sunday school program
- Our Youth Minister has a strong connection with our teens and young people
- **Our Senior Minister is retiring this summer**

COME...

and put your passionate compassion to work as we grow God's kingdom in our hearts and our community.



Contact - Search Committee
Paris Presbyterian Church
email: ppchurch@bellnet.ca

Jean Morris



Being the church in the world

Witnessing the benediction come alive this past year

The benediction is always at the end.

The benediction is the last word as the people leave the worship service and go into the world to live out their service to Christ.

The benediction is the blessing given and received in the name of God.

Writing this final article for *The Record* feels a bit like a benediction for me. My service as Moderator comes to an end at the opening of the 132nd General Assembly on June 4. I have been blessed over the last year as I have been among the people who are The Presbyterian Church in Canada. It has been a gift to be welcomed into the rhythm of congregational life, from coast to coast, through worship and pastoral care, programs and special events for all ages and stages of our church.

What has been most inspiring and encouraging for me are those congregations who are engaged in gospel ministry beyond the walls of the church. Many places I have visited, take seriously the charge, which usually accompanies the benediction, urging us as disciples of Jesus to take our faith into the world and live it beyond the church building. Fresh in my memory are the places I was taken in and around Vancouver that witness to the church being the church in the world. What a joy it was to participate with Mary Fontaine in a healing circle with members of the Sechelt Nation. It was a sacred moment to take the greetings of our church and be invited to share in their circle. Leading worship at St. Andrew's Hall, with Presbyterian students studying at Vancouver School of Theology, was another example of a place where our ministry extends beyond the congregation. Observing the work of Central in downtown Vancouver and assisting in the distribution of food at their weekly food bank, and a visit to Dunwood Place, which is an amazing complex of Senior's housing begun by the Presbytery over 30 years ago, were other examples of the church, being the church, in the world. Finally, I was able to bring greetings to the Taiwanese Golden Age Academy, a group of seniors who meet a number of times a week within Kerrisdale Presbyterian for education and fellowship. Elders and the minister from the Vancouver Taiwanese Presbyterian Church provide leadership for this active group of seniors who nurture body, mind and spirit in their meeting together. These are examples of the kind of creative, vibrant and faithful ministry of our church in many communities across Canada. The vision of congregations, presbyteries, other agencies and ecumenical partners, can make the charge and benediction that happens at the end of a worship service, become active service for Christ in the world.



Touring Dunwood Place, Vancouver: Dr. Donald McLean, Ron Zapp, Rev. Jean Morris, Ian Shepherd, Linda Bilinski, Betty Siverns and Lindsay Bremner. The facility is considered an oasis in the city by its senior and handicapped residents.

As I have shared my stories with friends, who are not Presbyterians, the most common response is, 'I didn't know Presbyterians were like that'

I am more convinced than ever that getting out of the church and into the world is the call of Christ for our time. While we need to nurture congregational life as home where, through word and sacrament, pastoral care and education, we are equipped to be faithful followers of Jesus, we need to have an intentional ministry beyond ourselves. My experience over the last year has enriched my faith as I have seen the power of Christ's ministry in the world through the congregations and other ministries of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. As I have shared my stories with friends, who are not Presbyterians, the most common response is, "I didn't know Presbyterians were like that."

We are like that! We are people committed to sharing the ministry of Christ with the world that God loves. And we are doing it in amazing and creative ways! We

are getting out of the church, to be the church in the world. Thanks be to God!

The benediction gives us God's blessing for our lives, and for our life together as the church. It sends us out with faith, hope and the assurance of Christ's presence with us.

My benediction for our church is one of Paul's.

"Keep alert, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong.
Let all you do be done in love.
The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you."

My love be with all of you in Christ.

M. Jean Morris

MODERATOR'S ITINERARY

June

3	**Elders' Institute, St, Andrew's Hall, St. Catharines, Ont.**
4-9	**General Assembly, St. Catharines**



Vibrant ministry in Vancouver: Rev. Glenn Inglis, Rev. Morris, Linda Inglis and Rev. Chin-Chai (Peter) Wang.

2006 CHRISTMAS ART CONTEST



Courtesy of Cassidy, age 7.

Hey kids!

We want your masterpiece on our cover

The *Record*'s first Christmas Art Contest is open to all those young or young at heart and to all Sunday Schools. Send your Christmas themed art on an 8 1/2 x 11 sheet to:

Christmas Art Contest
The Presbyterian Record
50 Wynford Drive
Toronto, ON M3C 1J7

or email file (minimum 300 dpi high quality jpeg) to:
record@presbyterianrecord.ca

All entries must be received by September 30, 2006.

DVD player we're out of mayonnaise new clothes the car needs an oil change tennis have

go to work change lanes email water the plants cat litter find out when meeting gardeni

clean closet SABBATH MOMENTS bake cookies c

dad clean driveway go to the park newspaper write poetry search for recipe walk the dog he

pants play board game with kids mow the lawn paint the bedroom sailing read a book go

church grocery list take the videos back tuck the kids into bed play video games stain t

dresser vacuum the car SABBATH MOMENTS pay bi

cut the vegetables go to the museum sleep shower file papers clean oven update music sit

the sunshine play catch research go to mom's need milk clear out garage baseball practi

comb the dog go skiing close the door daydream read to the kids pop in a movie pick a pai

color walk to work smell the air take out recycle bin fold the clothes take the meat out

freezer call brother SABBATH MOMENTS knitting vi

older friend pack the lunches file nails change windshield wipers repotting bird watchi

sitting in traffic walking in the rain reading the Bible scenic drive crossword find my keys sh

for pants listening to the radio build model train cup of tea take out summer clothes scr

booking digging in the dirt play with the cat mop kitchen floor jump rope take mom shoppi

cell phone plan vacation nap SABBATH MOMENT

flip through magazine care for sick uncle write in journal reflect on the day start the dishwash

tickle daughter soak the beans learn a new software feed the fish take a bath make desse

SABBATH MOMENTS *made by God for u*

LAITY EMPOWER • LAUGHTER CELEBRATES • GHANAIANS GROW

PRESBYTERIAN Record

July | August 2006

The Happy Assembly

Reports from the 132nd General Assembly

PM40069388 R09634

www.presbyterianrecord.ca



PRESBYTERIAN **Record**

Next Month:

Canada Youth 2006

It's bigger than General Assembly and way more fun. See the future today

Also: 40th Anniversary of women's ordination in the Presbyterian Church



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PRESBYTERIAN **Record**

www.presbyterianrecord.ca



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by Wilma Welsh

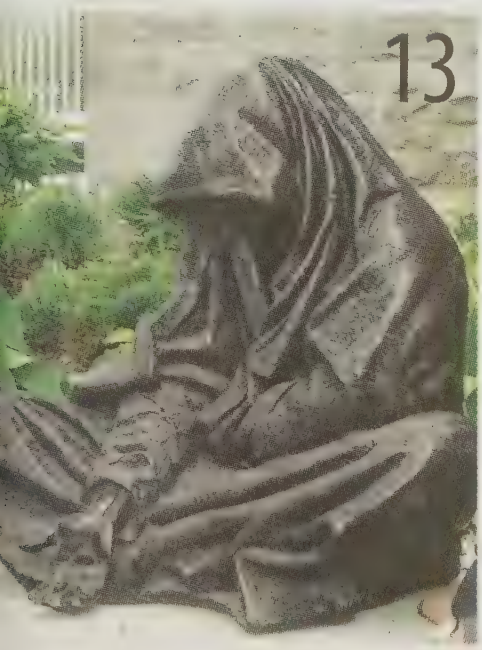
COVER FEATURE

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A Turin diary





On the cover: Commissioners respond to an earthy story about prophylactics told by former moderator Rev. Joe Reed from his mission work in Central America. Reed received a standing ovation for his many years of service to the church. Photo by Andrew Faiz.



The powerful and the vulnerable

Ministry depends on discerning the tigers from the lambs

Once upon a time in the Friendly Forest there lived a lamb who loved to graze and frolic. One day, a tiger came to the forest and said to the animals, "I would like to live among you." They were delighted. For they had no tiger in their woods. The lamb, however, had some apprehensions, which, being a lamb, she sheepishly expressed to her friends.

The tiger followed its nature and began to harass the lamb, to the point where some animals wondered what the lamb was doing to contribute to the tiger's aggressiveness. "Don't be so sheepish," they said. "Speak up to the tiger."

To which one uncouth animal remarked: "How ridiculous! If you want a lamb and a tiger to live in the same forest, you cage the tiger!"

Rabbi Ed Friedman's fable is a wry observation on how society so often makes the vulnerable responsible for protecting themselves from the powerful. And it is precisely this imbalance in church and other settings that screening processes aim to address. Screening involves rating jobs according to risk. It is an assessment of power differentials in relationships.

Like many other caregivers, ministers face vulnerability in their job. But when assessed in the wider context of the community in which they minister, they also wield profound power. That power creates an imbalance in pastoral relationships, just as it does for lawyers and physicians. Add that to the inequality between adults and youth, as in the Robert Fourney sex misconduct cases, and the power differential can be disabling.

Part of the sad story surrounding Dr. Fourney, the recently deposed Toronto minister, is that he and some of his supporters mistakenly think he was the vulnerable one in these pastoral relationships that have come back to haunt him.

While Dr. Fourney will need the support of his friends, supporting a lie will help no one.

Dr. Fourney accepts the salient facts in one complaint, although he admits no wrongdoing. He disputes the others cases entirely. His defence rests on suggesting his accusers exhibit false memory syndrome—fictional memories suggested by psychotherapy.

Since none of the complaints were tried in criminal court and church proceedings were in camera, the public can't judge this.

However, more than 80 per cent of the large East Toronto presbytery was unconvinced by this line of thinking, as was the smaller investigative committee that included people experienced in dealing with these matters. Wrongful accusations of sexual assault, for whatever reason, are made in about six per cent of cases in Canada, according to police statistics.

Two criminal charges didn't make it to trial because witnesses declined to testify. This is unsurprising: the stigma is enough, the remembering tortuous. Moreover, if complainants see the accused is publicly disciplined, as Dr. Fourney has been, they may feel no need to relive what they would rather forget.

As for Dr. Fourney, he waived his right to a church trial and has filed neither a wrongful dismissal suit against the presbytery nor slander suits against the complainants.

All this shows just how important it is for the church community to wrestle with the complex question of vulnerability in ministries and it reveals why screening programs are becoming more common in society.

And the church must not forget this has been most painful for the complainants. It was their vulnerability that was exploited in the first place and they made themselves vulnerable again in testifying before the church.

Others too will feel violated and wounded by these events, especially two congregations where Dr. Fourney ministered: St. Andrew's, Windsor, Ont. and Glenview, Toronto. It was during the time he was in Windsor that the accusations arose, while Glenview only knew a successful and progressive ministry.

It will be important for those congregations to remember that because a minister has done wrong, even great wrong, does not invalidate what he did right. The sacraments administered and the pastoral care he gave were all acts of God's grace and nothing can diminish that.

Every minister, every human, is a sinner. But the Spirit works in all of us despite that. May the Spirit work this summer to bring healing to the church.

David Harris

letters

It's about walking together

Re Walking Together and New Agreement Limits Liability, May. The one article was about walking together with aboriginal people and the recommendations that go with it. There was $500,000 set aside for this along with a lot of work and time.

The other article was about the new agreement by the Presbyterian Church to the Residential Schools settlement. The Presbyterian Church is limiting its cap for compensation from $2.1 million to $1.32 million. If the church was serious about walking together with my aboriginal brothers and sisters, why is it limiting its compensation to Residential Schools survivors? I thought it was about walking together, not one walking behind the other? The Presbyterian Church is not fully committed to walking together with its aboriginal neighbors.

Vivian Ketchum
Winnipeg

Calling all editors

I was shocked and dismayed to read about Rev. Mark Lewis being "appointed" to St. Andrew's, Kitchener, Ont. The Presbyterian Church in Canada does not appoint ministers unless it is an exceptional circumstance. The congregation of St. Andrew's called Rev. Mark Lewis in an extremely well supported call. To use the word appointed would suggest there was no call and the presbytery took unusual action.

I might also add that I am a Presbyterian minister and would ordinarily be referred to as "the Rev."

Vern Tozer
via email

Using the word appointment ignores the months of work of a dedicated search committee under the care and guidance of a properly appointed Interim Moderator. Using the word appointment implies that some outside body placed Rev. Lewis with us and ignores the fact that over 1,500 members and adherents called him to minister among us.

Ken Cressman
Clerk of Session
St. Andrew's Church, Kitchener

A child of God

Andrew Faiz's C.S. Lewis quote in the May issue was very apposite about nature. My initial reaction when I saw *March of the Penguins* was, What if life is nothing but a trek to the breeding ground, back to the sea, back to the breeding ground, back to the sea, ad infinitum, until death do us part.

Then I remembered that I was not a penguin, but a child of God. I was made in the image of God, and I have a future.

Cleaver Keenan
New Liskeard, Ont.

Uncle Allister's gift

The *Record* kindly ran a picture my family and me in the April People and Places, regarding the official announcement and presentation of a bequest from the estate of my late uncle, Allister Irwin MacDonald, former professor of English at Acadia University. His will contained a provision that the bequest, likely to top $200,000 once the estate is settled, be made to King's, New Minas, N.S., in memory of him, his late father and mother, Daniel and Ella MacDonald, and his five brothers, including the late Rev. Joseph R. MacDonald and the late Rev. Dr. Donald C. MacDonald, onetime moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Unfortunately, the wording accompanying the photograph conveyed the incorrect information that members of "Dr. MacDonald's family bequeathed over $200,000 to Kings," when in reality the funds came out of Uncle Allister's estate.

Don MacDonald
Halifax

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Canada Magazines Canada

Print faster than web

I went looking for the stunning nature photos mentioned in the May issue but find it not yet posted on your web site.

Gordon MacNeill
via email, sent April 29th

Editor notes: The printed version of this magazine arrives in readers' homes a week or so before the first day of the cover month. But, our web version goes live at the first second of the first day of the cover month.

Animated letter

Re Anne Saunders' letter in May. I took a second look at the March cartoon to which she referred. My interpretation of the cartoon is that we all need to have a long look into the mirror of truth and realize how often we exercise these five weapons of mass destruction in our daily speech and actions.

She also mentions exclusive language. A great number of readers have enjoyed an enriching relationship with our fathers, and therefore do enjoy talking to God our Father.

And, if Amy MacLachlan wishes to introduce us to a new word such as animateur, perhaps she could include a glossary at the end of her articles. Our older dictionary was of no help finding out who or what "the remaining 25 per cent would be used to pay."

I enjoy reading the *Record* and the variety of food for thought. Keep up the good work.

Diana Sinden
Beatty, Sask.

Trinity, Oro, simple, profound

It is good to be back in the Presbyterian Church after 12 years in another denomination. I have been praying for renewal in our church. Now I see through the glass dimly one part of the renewal happening at Trinity, Oro.

May the Word and Spirit guide our church as we seek to challenge a postmodern culture with the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Sunday message at Trinity is tailored less to existing believers and more to the friends of believers who are invited to come along.

Two neighbour boys whom I brought one week asked the question, "Can we come back here next week?" when I picked them up after Sunday school. The preaching is "simple, clear and profound" and presents the truth of God in "a timely, relevant container."

Jim Fraser
Barrie, Ontario

Minister deposed

I believe the zero tolerance policy of the church is a good policy. I also believe that Rev. Dr. Robert P. Fourney is innocent of the charges brought against him. When the case was brought before the court, the Judge dismissed the case because there was no evidence to substantiate the charges. A person is innocent until proven guilty so Fourney was declared innocent.

The Presbytery of East Toronto has chosen to accept the evidence of Fourney's accusers instead of his profession of innocence. The motives of those who brought charges against Fourney are not known. They may be perfectly sincere but it is now recognized that there is such a thing as false memory. Over the years, many innocent people have been condemned.

Rev. Kenneth G. McMillan
Thornhill, Ont.

I am a member of East Toronto Presbytery and attended all of the sessions involving the report by the sexual harassment committee regarding accusations against Bob Fourney. The meetings were closed, hence it is not appropriate for anyone to comment or describe the content thereof, especially with regard to the dignity and privacy of all of the persons directly involved.

Fourney was given all of the appeal options under the church's policy and chose of his own will to take no action.

The *Record* properly reported the decision, and the action taken by the presbytery. I strongly recommend that you take no further action.

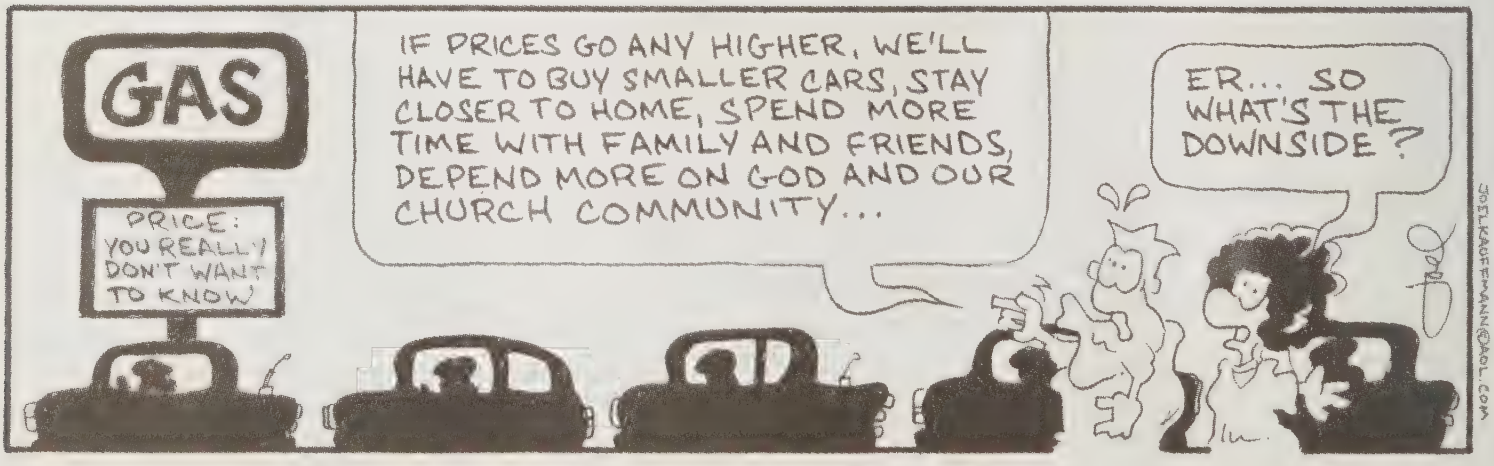
Jim Hutchison
Toronto

What does this say about the church when there is a committee set up to deal with such sexual problems?

Perhaps more should be done in finding those who may commit these offenses before they become clergy rather than clean up the mess that happens afterwards.

John Griese
Midland, Ont.

Pontius' Puddle



It is with considerable satisfaction that we read Minister Deposed for Sexual Misconduct. We speak with first hand experience about two past incidences.

In these cases, accusations were either swept under the carpet, the suspect was sent to another congregation, the victim was denied a hearing by senior Presbyterian officials, and/or described the victim as someone who accuses men. These facts came to light only later, but had a profound negative impact on career development. Some of these old boys still exist and I fear that only the most dire actions will demand attention.

The dramatic impact on the circle of victims and their families, whose voices were not allowed to be heard, should not be overlooked and a letter of apology should be sent to the victim as part of the healing process.

Dr. Neal and Nora Stoskopf
Guelph, Ont.

Where's Michael?

What happened to Michael Coren's column? I enjoyed it very much!

Marti O'Connell
Wingham, Ont.

Editor Replies: Mr. Coren is no longer a columnist for the *Record*.

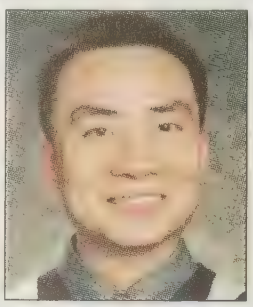
Corrections

• There have been four female moderators of the Presbyterian Church in Canada: Rev. Linda J. Bell, 1992, Tamiko Corbett, 1996, Rev. Jean Morris, 2005, and Wilma Welsh, 2006. The number was misreported in the May issue.

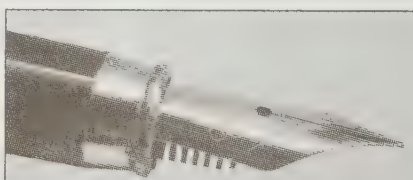
• The June issue of the *Record* incorrectly stated that the charges brought against former minister Robert Fourney for sexual assault and sexual exploitation were dropped by provincial court when the complainant declined to testify. Charges were actually dropped when the Crown elected to call no evidence. We apologize for the confusion.

• The June Presbytery Profile incorrectly described Rev. Hugh Appel as the supply minister at Argyle, Crinan and Duff, Largie. He is in fact the charge's duly called part-time minister.

• Edward Ho received his Master of Theological Studies from Knox College in May. We regret the omission.



Edward Ho
Scarborough Chinese Alliance Church,
Scarborough, Ont.



The *Presbyterian Record* welcomes letters to the editor. Please include your name, home address and a daytime telephone number. We reserve the right to edit all letters for length and clarity.

letters@presbyterianrecord.ca

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They served lunch and raised $284 and they made this banner stating, "Love is the greatest gift," and sent both to a mission partner in Malawi, as part of the PWS&D-sponsored Meeting Friends in Malawi study program. The young missionaries at Laurel Lee-St. Matthew's, Sarnia, Ont., are Kylie Geary, Julien Schieman, Jordan Schieman, Jasmyn Newton and Jessie-Anne Villeneuve. To see what happened to the banner turn to page 10.





Stephen Ministers are caregivers to those who are new to the community, have just had a child, have moved to senior's residence, have gone through a divorce or separation, are enjoying the challenges of a teenager, suffering a death in the family and much more. They listen. Their motto is, We care but God cures. St. Andrew's, Whitby, Ont., celebrated the graduation of these members to this effective lay ministry: Back: Clerk of Session John Campbell, Karen Oke, Kaye Meek, Eleanore Saliba, Sheila Smyth and Rev. Saliba. Front: Mary Anderson, Sharon Pees, Monica McClure, Vicki Semotiuk, Carole and Chuck Lennox.

HAD CAKE LATELY? Share your celebrations with the rest of the church. Send your stories to PnP@presbyterianrecord.ca along with your digital photographs, 300 dpi minimum, high quality JPEGs. Or mail the photographs to: The Record, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, M3C 1J7.

To be considered for People and Places, photographs should be sharp and everyone clearly identified. The *Record* reserves the right to reject any photos not of sufficient quality. Photographs cannot be returned.



Helen Stewart could be accused of having a long memory, but she wouldn't be insulted. On the occasion of her 90th birthday she was also awarded a certificate from the General Assembly's Committee on History for her book Built On Faith: St Matthew's, Ingleside, Ontario. Helen is pictured here receiving her award with Rosemary Rutley and, in the back row, Donald MacLeod, former convener of the Committee on History, Dale Skinner, her pastor, and Donald Dell, representative elder from St Matthew's.



If you happen to be near church offices on Thursday evenings this summer, make sure you drop by Gateway Community, Toronto, less than a mile away, and say hello to Abel Somar. He'll fix you something on the barbeque, the way he has for years, on the church's front yard. The Thursday barbeque is a successful outreach program offered by the church and is open to anyone in the community (or, to those just driving by; tell them the *Record* sent ya and have them put it on the tab).



Imagine if there was somebody who could provide spiritual *and* medical healing. Well there is—they're called parish nurses. And, that's what Janna Dodds (left) has been doing at Melville, Ont., for the past eight years. Bidding her farewell are Mary Douma, Clerk of Session and Cathrine Campbell, Minister. Inspired by this experience, the Sunday school is raising funds to provide tuition for a nurse and a doctor in India, through Something Extra.

For more People & Places submissions please visit our website: www.presbyterianrecord.ca

No Sweat policy adopted

THE CITY OF TORONTO recently adopted a "no sweatshop" policy and Canadian activists are pushing for other cities to do the same. The No Sweat purchasing policy requires apparel manufacturers who supply Toronto to comply with internationally recognized labour and human rights standards. Vancouver adopted an Ethical Procurement Policy for city apparel, food and coffee last year.

Presbyterian World Service & Development supports this policy and the Maquila Solidarity Network which has long promoted the change. "We endorse the campaigns initiated by Maquila to promote sweat-free purchasing," Guy Smagghe, program coordinator for Central America and India, told the *Record*. "We particularly support their efforts to help workers in the south know about their rights and expose abusive working conditions."

Toronto buys almost $4 million in apparel annually for police, firefighter and transit uniforms, amongst other things. – *AM with notes from Maquila Solidarity Network*

New youth resource

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH has a new resource for kids. *Pathways to Leadership* teaches nine basic leadership skills including teaching a song, building a group, telling a story, negotiating with people in authority and reading scripture in worship. The intended age group is nine to 12, but can be adapted for use with teens or even adults. Written by Dorothy Henderson, associate secretary for children and youth, and June Holohan, an elder at Unionville Presbyterian Church, *Pathways* is designed for use at a weekend camp setting, where each child comes with an adult who made a commitment to help them with leadership tasks when they return home. Read more about it in the August PCPak, or it can be purchased through the Book Room for $12.95. Call 1-800-619-7301 ext. 239 to order. – *AM*

SPOTLIGHT



This banner was made in Sarnia, Ont., (see People and Places) and travelled to Malawi with Rev. Carol Hamilton (left) who presented it to Esther Lupafya who works in the Ekwendeni HIV/AIDS program in Malawi. Hamilton was on a PWS&D HIV/AIDS study trip.

CCC head announced

THE CANADIAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES has announced that Rev. Dr. James T. Christie has been elected president for the years 2006-2009. The United Church minister is currently dean of the faculty of theology at the University of Winnipeg and dean of the university's Global College. His specialty lies in inter-faith dialogue and he has extensive experience in ecumenism and global governance. Christie recently completed a three-year term as a vice president of the CCC.

Current council vice presidents are: Rev. Paul Johnson, Evangelical Lutheran Church, Rev. Dr. Marion Pardy, United Church and Rev. Pierre Voyer, Anglican Church. Don Taylor, former chief financial officer and treasurer for the Presbyterian Church, was re-elected treasurer.

Newly-elected youth members of the council's governing board are: Catholic Gillian Girodat, Armenian Orthodox Rev. Hayrik Hovhannisyan, and Anglican Natasha Klukach.

The Presbyterian Church is a member of the CCC, which is one of the broadest ecumenical councils in the world and represents approximately 85 per cent of Canada's Christians.

PWS&D responds to Java

PRESBYTERIAN WORLD SERVICE & DEVELOPMENT is working with Action by Churches Together to help the more than 200,000 left homeless and injured by the earthquake that hit the Indonesian island of Java on May 27th. The 6.3-magnitude quake left more than 5,000 people dead.

Through ACT, a global alliance of churches and related agencies, PWS&D is helping to ensure that medical care, shelter, food, clean water and sanitation make it to the most affected communities. Within hours of the quake, three ACT members in Indonesia were responding.

Natalia Caw, a relief worker, reported that injured people were being treated in the hospitals' corridors and terraces since the numbers were reaching the thousands. She noted a need for more medical staff, medicines and surgical equipment.

To help with the relief effort, donations can be made through your congregation or directly to PWS&D. Remember to clearly mark your gift PWS&D Indonesia Earthquake Relief.

Distribution of food packages and clean water were underway at press time.

Bhil people released

The 14 Bhil people imprisoned in India since January 2004 have been acquitted of all charges and released. The accused had been imprisoned for incidents surrounding Hindu attacks on Christian homes. The Supreme Court of India's decision came on May 31st after years of delayed trials, no-show witnesses and judges and difficulty getting bail for the accused. The long-awaited decision was met with joy at the Presbyterian Church's national offices. "It feels great to get this news," said Ron Wallace, associate secretary for International Ministries. "The dismissal of the charges against the Bhil prisoners and their release from prison are an answer to the prayers of many faithful people, both in Canada and in India."

Peace in the Bhil region ended on Jan. 16th, when Christian homes were burned and a church was damaged due to civil unrest. While Christians in Amkhut were protecting their church, a young Hindu man was killed. Thirteen members of that church community were arrested. Eight of them, including the pastor and the principal of the local Christian school, were charged with murder.

Relations between Hindus and Christians in the area have historically been peaceful, but the situation in all of India has been deteriorating since 1998. The extremist group RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh or National Volunteer Corps) is believed to be the group responsible for the violence toward the Bhil people, and for the escalating unrest between Hindus, Christians and Muslims in the country.

The Presbyterian Church has been working with the Bhil people of Vindhya Satpura for more than 100 years. Canadian Presbyterian Pauline Brown lives in the Bhil region, and Presbyterian World Service & Development supports the Jobat Christian Hospital and other community health initiatives. International Ministries posts updates on its website and keeps close contact with the Church of North India. Various departments within the Presbyterian Church have sent funds to the region to help with legal expenses, to support the prisoners' families and to help re-build a church that was burned down.

'It will probably be some time though before the prisoners and their families are able to pick up the pieces and get back to normal lives'

Other details about the state of the region and if anyone responsible for the vandalism will be punished are unknown at this point. "There are still tensions fomented by the RSS, but there is peace in the Bhil area at the present time," Wallace told the *Record*. "It will probably be some time though before the prisoners and their families are able to pick up the pieces and get back to normal lives."

Christians form 2.4 per cent of India's population, 82 per cent of which is Hindu and 12 per cent Muslim. A 1999 report by Human Rights Watch notes that attacks against Christians throughout the country have increased significantly since the ruling Bharatiya Janata party assumed power in 1998. The agency said the Hindu organizations mainly responsible for the attacks, which include the killing of priests, rape of nuns and the destruction of Christian institutions, are the RSS, Bajrang Dal (the youth wing of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad) and the VHP itself, an off shoot of the RSS. "Its critics call the VHP a hardline Hindu outfit with unmistakably close ties to its parent organization, the extremist RSS, whose objective to 'Hinduise' the Indian nation, it shares," writes Rajyasri Rao, a BBC correspondent in Delhi.

Rao goes on to explain that "central to the RSS ideology has been the belief that real national unity and progress will come only when India is 'purged' of non-Hindus, or, when members of other communities subordinate themselves 'willingly' to 'Hindu superiority.'" – *AM with files from International Ministries*

WARC creator mourned

WILLIAM P. THOMPSON, a United States church leader and layperson instrumental in bringing the world's Congregationalists and Presbyterians together in the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, and its first president, died at age 87.

Rev. Stephen Kendall, the PCC's principal clerk and moderator of WARC's finance and fundraising committee, said,"We are grateful to servants such as William Thompson for their vision and dedication in bringing WARC to be."

Thompson, a lawyer described by the Presbyterian News Service as a brilliant legal and organizational thinker, led the Presbyterian Church through the civil-rights struggles of the 1960s, and the anti-Vietnam War movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s. – *ENI and AM*

Quebec minister leaves



MARC-HENRI VIDAL, who has been pastoring Saint-Luc, Quebec's largest French Presbyterian church, as well as leading several other key ministries in the province, will be assuming a new pastorate in Washington, D.C. at the beginning of July.

From his home base at Eglise Presbytérienne Saint-Luc in the east end of Montreal, Vidal had also been involved with French outreaches in collaboration with Westminster, Pierrefonds, St.Andrew's, Lennoxville and St. Andrew's, Melbourne. Under his leadership Saint-Luc developed a monthly Sunday afternoon outreach to immigrants from Madagascar living in the greater Montreal area.

Vidal has played a key editorial role in the production of *La Vie Chrétienne*, the French language quarterly journal of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. – *Joel Coppieters*

Sexual misconduct stories 'served the church well'

'If the church's own magazine won't tell bad stories, who will?' | BY RECORD STAFF

Stories published in the *Presbyterian Record* in 2005 and subsequently about sexual assault charges against a Presbyterian minister played a key role in the church's eventual disciplinary proceedings in the matter, the church has been told.

Representatives from the Presbytery of East Toronto told fellow commissioners at the June General Assembly in St. Catharines, Ont., that other complainants read the stories and lodged formal complaints with the presbytery.

Donna Wells, a member of the presbytery's Sexual Harassment and Abuse Committee and a commissioner later said that: "The committee, to the person, believes the three articles published by the *Record* regarding Robert Fourney served the church well because they encouraged people who had complaints to come forward."

Although criminal proceedings against Fourney were eventually dropped because the Crown chose not to call any evidence, other complainants told their story to the committee investigating the alleged crimes. The criminal case was the second one that had been brought against the former minister of Glenview, Toronto, and St. Andrew's, Windsor, Ont. The charges date back to the early 90s, when Fourney was in Windsor.

Both the committee and presbytery as a whole accepted the testimony of the complainants as substantially true and voted to depose Fourney from ordained ministry.

Fourney declined to appeal to the General Assembly to call a church court to hear the case. As a result, he was formally deposed.

In an interview with the *Record*, Fourney maintained his innocence, claiming that two of the three complaints were without substance. Of the third he said, "I didn't do anything inappropriate. I wouldn't do that today, but that was a long time ago and we didn't think in the same way we do today."

Fourney further argued that the church's sexual harassment and abuse process was to blame for him being deposed. "According to this policy any elder or any leader could have a complaint brought against them. And if that happens it will be very difficult to prove your innocence. You can't argue, you can't defend yourself. I had pages and pages of defence."

The Sexual Harassment and Abuse Committee of the Presbytery of East Toronto began its investigation in January this year. They met with Fourney and with the complainants. The committee pored through the testimony and evidence provided by concerned parties. Rev. Jim Biggs, clerk of presbytery, wrote in an email that the committee had "a lot of pain to deal with."

Fourney, along with the complainants, was present at the meeting of the full court of presbytery, where the committee presented its own report, based upon its investigation. It recommended "that three complaints have been substantiated and that Robert Fourney be deposed as a minister of Word and Sacrament." Fourney spoke to the court; as did the complainants.

Publishing the stories brought an overture from the Presbytery of Seaway-Glengarry that essentially wanted the *Record* to adopt a policy not to publish the names of people accused of crimes unless they are found guilty.

'When people sense a conspiracy of silence, they are unlikely to trust the institution. The recent stories of sexual abuse being hidden by church officials in denominations across North America should serve as ample warning to the dangers of secrecy'

The *Record's* board replied: "We believe the church is well served by openness and transparency and poorly served by secretiveness.

"When people sense a conspiracy of silence, they are unlikely to trust the institution. The recent stories of sexual abuse being hidden by church officials in denominations across North America should serve as ample warning to the dangers of secrecy."

Record editor David Harris said although publishing such stories causes anguish, in the long run, the magazine believes the stories will help both church and society. "Both the magazine and the church would take severe hits to their credibility and integrity if we didn't publish stories of this sort," he said.

"The magazine's editorial independence from the church and the board would be seen as meaningless. As for the church, if we don't tell bad stories when they happen, who will? Sometimes telling bad stories is part of telling the Good News: they help the institution deal with evil and avoid or at least minimize the chance of recurrence."

One of the victims made a similar comment to the *Record*, saying the decision to speak to presbytery was difficult but he felt it important "to make sure Fourney was not in a position to hurt anyone else."

Harris admitted the decision to publish these stories was controversial and cost the magazine several hundred subscriptions. "Messengers are always targets," he said. The *Record* previously lost several thousand subscriptions for publishing news stories about a presbytery investigating the issue of gay marriage.



Statue confronts Ottawa

A NEW STATUE outside of St. Andrew's, Ottawa, evokes thoughts of Jesus with an outstretched hand, encouraging passers-by to remember His words of compassion: "Whatsoever you do to the least of my brothers and sisters, you do unto me." The bronze statue, entitled Whatsoever You Do, depicts a seated human figure cloaked in anonymity. Sculptor Timothy Schmalz was at the May 28th dedication. "I imagine people going to Parliament to see the great leaders of the nation, and as they walk there, they pass by this humble leader, Jesus Christ," he said. "It's not meant to be a decoration. It is meant to be a confrontation; to challenge people." St. Andrew's is located at the heart of the nation's capital, and has been since 1828.

Church provides santuary

ROSEDALE PRESBYTERIAN, Toronto, will daily provide a place of sanctuary for those attending the XVI AIDS Conference and the Ecumenical Pre-Conference, August 10 - 18, in Toronto. The church, decorated with PWS&D's new posters for the Towards A World Without AIDS campaign, will be open from 2 p. m. to 8 p.m. as a place of quiet reflection for the expected 20,000 international delegates.

The world's largest conference on HIV/AIDS will have over 400 sessions, meetings and workshops and over 4,000 presentations. The theme for this year is, Time To Deliver. Conference abstracts, papers and session will be available online at www.aids2006.org. According to PWS&D, of the 42 million people currently living with AIDS, 95 per cent are in the developing world.

"This is a great opportunity to engage in our community," said Ken Craigie, an elder at Rosedale.



A young apprentice learns shoe repair skills with the support of PWS&D.

PHOTO: RUTH HOUTBY, PWS&D

The Apprentice

The skills the shoe repairman learned at the Presbyterian Church of Ghana's Garu Community Based Rehabilitation Center are being passed on to the young apprentice pictured here. The apprentice, like his teacher, has a physical disability that prevents him from walking. They were matched by Garu's community workers, who connect graduates of their vocational training programs with people in their communities who face similar challenges. In addition to providing a marketable skill, the graduates mentor the apprentices – helping them build self-confidence and learn the essential skills to make a business successful. It is just one example of how the vocational centre – with the support of PWS&D – is working at the grassroots to improve the lives of people often forgotten in the society around them.

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A group of missionaries from St. Andrew's, Scarborough, who had raised $26,000 to help restore a school in Ukraine, joined Brian Johnston's choir in Cluj, Romania, for Amazing Grace, while passing through in May.

Canadian-led European choir tours in the fall

The Choir of the Hungarian Reformed Seminary in Romania will be heading to Canada for a concert tour from Sept. 20th to Oct. 10th. Presented by The Presbyterian Church in Canada, the choir will visit all four Atlantic provinces as well as southern Ontario. The seminary students glorify God through joyful music, bearing witness to how God has worked to restore the church in Romania after years of persecution.

The choir will be performing hymns and gospel songs, classical selections and Hungarian folk music. In addition to the seminary students, there will be two musicians from the conservatory in Kolozsvár/Cluj, both active members of the Hungarian Reformed Church.

The 19-member choir is under the direction of the Presbyterian Church's mission staff person, Brian Johnston. Johnston grew up in southwestern Ontario, and served as organist/choir director at Knox, Waterloo, from 1987-1992. A brief stint in Hungary in 1982, where he further developed his passion for music and music education, sparked his close connection with the Hungarian people.

He began his work as a music and English teacher in Romania at the Theological Seminary of the Hungarian Reformed Church in 1993, which was formally recognized and supported by the Presbyterian Church four years later. Steve Ross, Mary Goromby and David Pándy-Szekeres are the church's other mission workers in the region. A Youth in Mission group has been travelling to Eastern Europe since 1999 to help Johnston establish English camps.

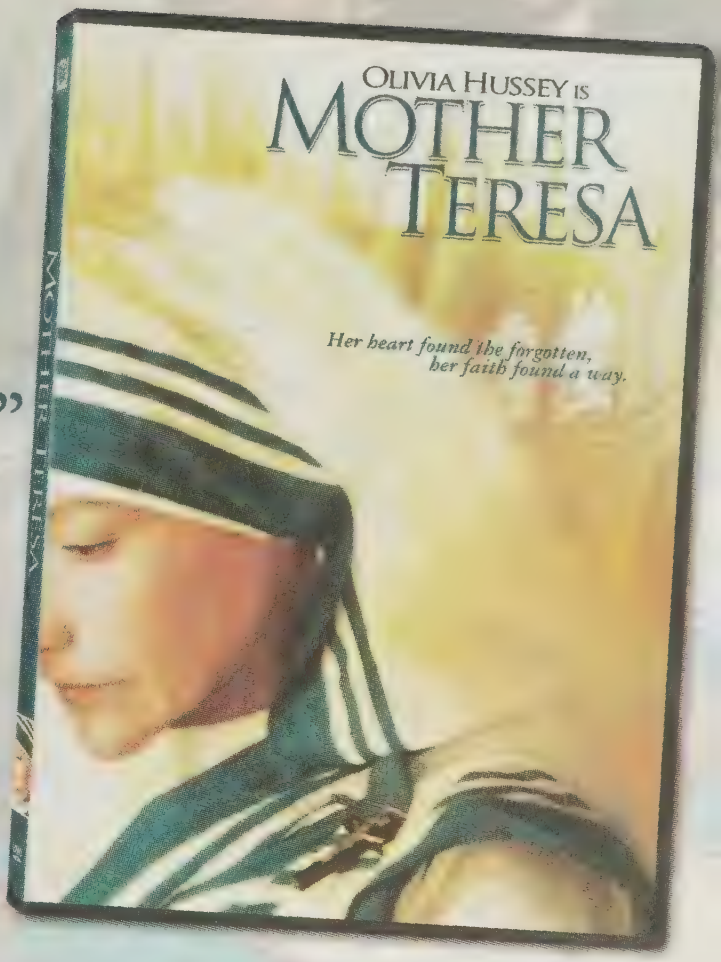
For more information contact Barbara Nawratil at bnawratil@presbyterian.ca, 416-441-1111 or 1-800-619-7301. To watch a video of the choir and to find the full schedule for the Canadian tour, please visit the *Record*'s website. – *AM*

"THE MOST SPIRITUALLY UPLIFTING FILM SINCE *The Passion of the Christ.*"

- Phil Boatwright, The Movie Reporter

In a powerful portrayal, Golden Globe winner Olivia Hussey illuminates the life story of Mother Teresa, the selfless missionary who brought hope, love and salvation to the poorest of the poor.

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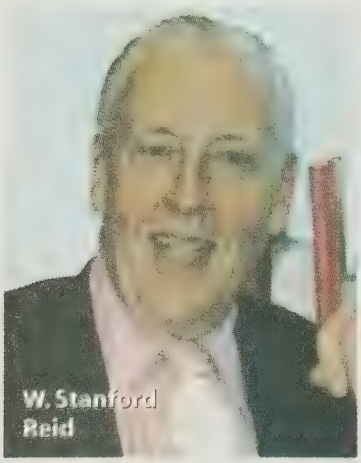
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Presbyterian honoured by historical society

REV. DONALD MACLEOD'S biography of Presbyterian minister W. Stanford Reid recently received the Donald Grant Creighton Award. The citation for the award states that the book about "Reid's spiritual and intellectual journey gives a balanced in-depth critique of the man and his times, never fawning or censorious."

W. Stanford Reid: An Evangelical Calvinist in the Academy chronicles the life of Reid and his wife, Priscilla. Reid was a parish minister and church planter in the Presbyterian Church, as well as an academic who left a tenured position as a professor at McGill University in 1965 to found the History Department at the University of Guelph. Much of the Scottish collection in the archives of the university's McLaughlin Library—generally regarded as the finest outside Scotland—was gathered by Reid. He also established the Scottish Studies program at Guelph. Mrs. Reid, the daughter and granddaughter of Presbyterian ministers, was active in the Women's Missionary Society.

At the awards presentation, MacLeod said Reid has been underrated by the academy and his own denomination. Like Reid, MacLeod is a Presbyterian minister, serving most recently at St. Andrew's, Trenton, Ont. MacLeod was a student of Reid's, and has taught at Tyndale Theological Seminary in Toronto and was recently appointed research professor there.

The award, conferred at the Ontario Historical Society's annual meeting in Orillia, Ont., on May 6th, is named after Donald Grant Creighton, the biographer of Sir John A. Macdonald. – *Priscilla & Stanford Reid Trust*

Hold mining companies accountable

Groups ask government to establish laws for those operating abroad

BY AMY MACLACHLAN

The Canadian government is being taken to task concerning its support of several Canadian mining companies operating abroad, which are allegedly abusing international human rights law and endangering the political, social and physical environments of the areas in which they are operating. Government representatives met with people from the affected communities and with human rights advocates in April, who are calling on the government to monitor and correct the behaviour of Canadian companies working abroad.

'It's not just about human rights and environmental standards, but about conflict in society. It's creating politica and social conflict as well'

"We think it's really important the government take our proposals and voices into account," said Ana Maria Alvarado Garcia, speaking through a translator. "There is a globalization of resource extraction, and that's affecting communities around the world. The government needs to understand where we're coming from."

Alvarado Garcia, who is a member of Mexico's Broad Opposition Front, has been protesting a mine in her hometown of Cerro de San Pedro for 10 years. In June 2005, the *Record* reported that the town had been spared potential damage from the open-pit gold and silver mine that was set to operate by Canadian-owned Metallica Resources. Locals said the mine would destroy its surrounding ecosystem, contaminate the water supply and flatten the Hill of St. Peter, a state symbol. In April, a federal court upheld an earlier decision to name the town a preservation area, annulling the company's mining permit. Despite this, the mining preparation continues.

"We want the government to wake up and pay attention to what a Canadian company is doing," said Alvarado Garcia, adding that the Mexican government is also to blame for not enforcing its own laws. "It's not just about human rights and environmental standards, but about conflict in society. It's creating political and social conflict as well."

The forum in Ottawa was precipitated by a report from the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade. The report acknowledges that some mining companies are having adverse affects on communities and calls for the government to ensure compliance with international guidelines, and to "establish clear legal norms in Canada to ensure that Canadian companies and residents are held accountable." Companies that do not adhere to such policies should lose government financing.

Parliament heard SCFAIT's recommendations last June, but according to Rachel Warden, program coordinator for Latin America partnerships at KAIROS, the government is maintaining the status quo. It instead agreed to hold round table discussions sometime in the near future with the affected parties. Warden said such people want to be involved in the decision-making process as to where mines will operate, and want a legal framework to control behaviour, since current standards are voluntary.

Metallica told the *Record* in the past that it has done what it can to ensure the town and its citizens are protected from adverse consequences, including transplanting 120,000 cactus plants classified as valued vegetation.

"What we're asking for is respect," said Alvarado Garcia. "We're not enemies of progress, but we don't want the planet to be affected anymore. This will affect all of humanity, not just my community."

KAIROS is supported by the Presbyterian Church and has been helping affected communities in their plight.



From left, Samuel Danquah, of the Ghanaian Montreal congregation, Herbert Anim Opong, assembly clerk of The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Enoch Pobee, of the Toronto congregation and Yaw Frimpong-Manso, moderator of the Ghanaian Church.

Ghanaians dedicate two churches in Canada

Congregations are members of national churches in both countries | BY AMY MACLACHLAN

The Presbyterian Church's two Ghanaian congregations dedicated their new buildings in May, marking the years of hard work and determination it took to realize their dreams. "This came at the right time," said Rev. Samuel Kofi Danquah of the Ghanaian Church in Montreal. "We thank God especially for the helping hand the head office has given us, and for giving us this opportunity."

The Ghanaian Presbyterian Church, Montreal, held its service on May 7th, celebrating its five-year history. The congregation bought the new building thanks to a grant from Canada Ministries for $345,000. They took possession in July 2004, moved in by October, and then began some renovations and repairs. The building houses a sanctuary for 300 people, two halls where 200 people can gather, and several smaller rooms for Bible studies and other activities. The large space leaves room for growth, with about 150 adults, 30 young adults and 70 children already part of the church.

The Toronto church dedicated its new, modern facility on May 21st. The congregation began in 1994, and after moving to various buildings throughout those years, members decided it was time to find a place they could call home. They began building in Oct. 2004, and construction was completed a year later. The $4.2-million structure dominates the skyline in the city's north end, and attracts about 500 Ghanaians from miles away.

Rev. Enoch Pobee is in the third year of a five-year appointment at the Toronto church. "We have moved through rain, we moved through shine, we've been through drought, and now we have joy because we have a place of our own," he said.

The relationship is a unique one with the Presbyterian Church. The two congregations are members of The Presbyterian Church of Ghana, and the ministers are appointed by that body. Still, they enjoy full membership status and privileges within the Canadian church, and adhere to its rules and regulations. Gordon Haynes, associate secretary for Canada Ministries, has watched the relationship since its inception, and attended both building dedications. For Montreal, that meant a lively service on Saturday and two on Sunday, and in Toronto, the four-and-a-half-hour long service had "joyous music, and was loud and raucous. It was really something," said Haynes. "These congregations are so generous and open. I felt totally at home."

He said congregations that cater to a particular race or culture will continue to grow in the Presbyterian Church. He mentioned Korean, Chinese and Arabic churches that already exist, and said much of his department's church extension work is being done with visible minorities.

Noting that the church is much more ingrained in Ghanaian society, he added: "It's not just a church; it's a community and cultural centre. It brings the people together. They bring an enthusiasm for their faith, and I think that's an infection all of us should get. And they remind us that this is a growing church, and there are other ways of doing things."

"We pray that at the end of the day," said Danquah, "we can help our people come to the realization that no matter what, Christ matters most."

A netherworld of despair

ENI–The U.S. National Council of Churches has called for the closure of the American detention centre at Guantanamo Bay. The controversial jail has been described by *The New York Times* "as the inevitable result of creating a netherworld of despair beyond the laws of civilized nations, where men were to be held without any hope of decent treatment, impartial justice or, in so many cases, even eventual release."

Rev. Robert Edgar, the council's general secretary, said, "Americans who love their country and its historic ideals are mortified by this continuing blot on our honour, on our steadfast defense of freedom and on our commitment to democracy and the rule of law."

In Paris, the International Federation of Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture called for the centre to be closed and for all detainees to be brought to trial or released. "No democracy should be allowed to disregard international law with such impunity," the group said.

Conversion law repealed

ENI–A law in the Indian province of Tamil Nadu which banned religious conversion has been repealed by the federal government. The law prompted massive protests by Christians who feared it was directed against religious minorities and could put at risk relief work undertaken by churches. Similar laws are in force in several other Indian states.

"The government decision is a clear proof that such discriminatory laws do not stand the test of India's time-honoured values of freedom of conscience and religious tolerance," said the Rev. Babu Joseph, spokesperson of the Indian Catholic Bishops' Conference.

Ecumenism encouraged

ENI–The head of Greece's Orthodox church has urged Christians of different denominations to step up cooperation to promote unity in the face of growing secularism in society.

"It's an urgent task because we are living in an age where there is huge alienation with secularism, globalization and the breakdown of moral values," Archbishop Christodoulos of Athens said during a visit to the headquarters of the World Council of Churches in May.

"If the Church does not speak of universal ethical values, who will?" said the archbishop, whose church was a founding member of the WCC in 1948 and accounts for about 98 per cent of Greece's 10.7 million people.

In Geneva, Archbishop Christodoulos also met the UN's High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres, to discuss cooperation on refugee issues and ways of combating intolerance.

PC(USA) softens on Israel

ENI–By a vote of 483 to 28 the Presbyterian Church (USA) set as church policy that "financial investments ... as they pertain to Israel, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank, be invested in only peaceful pursuits."

Under the new policy, investments are to be subjected to the existing "corporate engagement" process of the church and evaluated by the same standards and process as other PCUSA investments in all other countries.

The American Jewish Council's David Bernstein said the new wording "subjects Israel to the same process as every other country in the world. That's what we wanted. Singling out Israel is not the way to approach peace in the Middle East."

The Presbyterian assembly also said it was "grieved by the pain" that resulted from its 2004 decision within the denomination and among many members of the Jewish community.

The denomination's stated clerk, Rev. Clifton Kirkpatrick, said the decision did not overturn the actions of the 2004 general assembly, the Presbyterian News Service reported.

The Rev. Gretchen Graf, moderator of the committee charged with following the initiative through, said the new policy affirmed the work of her committee, "which recommends divestment only as a last resort."

Zambians fight sexism

ENI–The Council of Churches in Zambia is campaigning to fight discrimination against women in the church. The council's coordinator for gender and child development, Suzanne Matale, said, "We are working with women theologians in Zambia to come up with a gender policy for the churches to understand fully gender issues and to strengthen women's leadership in the churches. The time has come to eliminate rampant discrimination against women in the Church in Zambia."

Pastors with guns

ENI–Clerics have not been spared in Malawi's spiralling of armed robberies and the situation is so severe the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian says it will allow some clerics to own at least one firearm for personal protection.

Central Malawi Nkhoma Synod's Church and Society Program director, Allan Chiphiko, said, "It is true the synod reverends will now be allowed to own guns for their safety because our pastors have been victims of various attacks and robberies. There is nothing else we can do. This is just a matter of defense or self-protection. A pastor is also a person like anybody else, he feels pain."

Small loan, big difference

ENI–Entrepreneurs with small enterprises in the northern Philippines say a church-backed financing program has helped improve the overall quality of their lives and also helped to strengthen their Christian faith. "I thank the Lord Jesus Christ for giving us the [Swiss-based] Ecumenical Church Loan Fund because without it, my family would not be where we are now," said 50-something Estrella Baliang, who buys and sells socks, jackets and other clothes. "With the ECLOF backing, our business continues to grow."

The "fair-credit-to-promote-human-development" project was begun in 1946 and has a partnership with the World Council of Churches. It is present in 30 developing countries and it has 1,450 clients in the Philippines.

A sure sign of something

We may be small but we have character (and a lot of constituencies)

BY ANDREW FAIZ

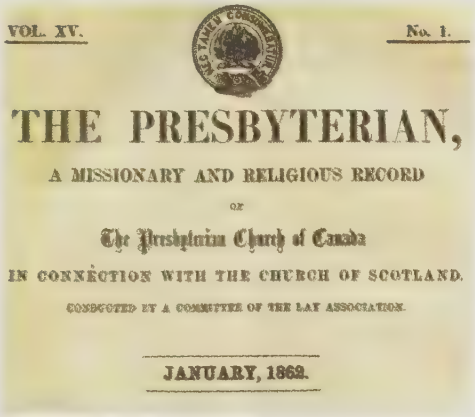
I popped in at General Assembly for about 36 hours. From my position as managing editor of this magazine I have established relationships via email with a lot of people across the country but have met very few of them. I went to this annual family reunion to glad-hand, while my colleagues worked. (Thank you, Amy and David.)

Family: Michael James introduced himself to me and reminded me we were schoolmates over 35 years ago in Lahore, Pakistan. Michael was a commissioner from the Presbytery of Montreal; my mother had been his teacher at the high Anglican school we both attended. Small world.

Jean Lawrence, now at VST, remembered having lunch at my uncle's home in Karachi when she was there on a mission trip in the early 1980s. And it was good to meet once more with Sydney MacDonald with whom I last broke bread a quarter century ago at his home in Red Deer, Alta. Connie Madsen and I spoke of how Rocky Mountain House, Alta., has changed since I was lay minister there. (Connie was kind to not remind me I was a lousy lay minister.)

Family indeed: Perhaps Ted Rev. Siverns is right (see the General Assembly report in this issue) and this was a particularly friendly gathering of the clan. (By the way, Ted's a fun guy.) (There was a little acrimony about this and that, sure, like any family gathering, but dealt Presbyterianally with motions and votes.) Many people came to me (as they did David Harris and Amy MacLachlan) and complimented our work at the *Record*. Many kind words; all spoken from within the family to the family. There were a few avuncular chastisements as well.

It was good to meet some old friends,


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IN CONNECTION WITH THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

CONDUCTED BY A COMMITTEE OF THE LAY ASSOCIATION.

JANUARY, 1862.

make some new ones, meet my former ministers and shake hands with people I've long admired but never met.

And, I learned there are Angolan Presbyterians—I met one, Mariano Congo, a commissioner from West Toronto. Based on advice once given me by the *Record's* former editor James Ross Dickey, I told Mariano I will be pulling for Angola in the FIFA World Cup. (Jim told me that rooting for an underdog helps build character. I wonder if Jim's still a Cleveland Indians' fan; that would certainly explain a lot if he were.)

After a fun time with the family, I left Wednesday afternoon and on Thursday morning I was at a conference for Canadian magazines.

I had booked the *Record* to be analyzed by a panel of magazine professionals, with the hope we might receive constructive criticisms about the magazine's editorial content and its design. But, oh no, that's not what I got, at all.

I felt like a minnow in the ocean; I was asked why the magazine existed at all—couldn't it just be a website?

Uhm, I muttered the *Record* is 130 years old and serves one of this nation's seminal institutions.

I was asked why The Presbyterian Church in Canada needed two magazines, referring to *Glad Tidings*.

Uhm, you see, they are slightly different constituencies within the same constituency; it's an historical thing. And, I went on to explain, there are other magazines within the church as well: the French *La Vie Chretienne*, along with *Women's Perspective*, *A New Network*, *The Presbyterian Message*, and others.

But, really, they asked, does the church need all of them?

They are all different constituencies within the church, I explained again, wondering all the while whether they were criticizing the magazine or the church.

I don't think this was a reality check; I recognize our stature within our society. But, the back-to-back hits were jarring. And, I began to wonder, again, how this emotionally and psychologically affects us as members of this church.

Jim's right, of course, pulling for an underdog does help build character. But being an underdog can also mess with one's mind. It can foster insularity and the sensibility that we are either too small to matter in the world, or, too perfect to belong to it.

I believe we've dealt well with these issues: from my desk I see local, often flailing, churches reaching deep into their communities and to the world. This is not true of all congregations, of course, but I live in hope.

I must, I think, because of all the places to hang my hat, I've chosen the PCC. That's a sure sign of something; maybe even of character.

Andrew Faiz is a writer, producer and filmmaker. He is also managing editor of the Record. You can reach him at mngeditor@presbyterianrecord.ca.

Breaking through the glass ceiling

Subtle transformations across the church come slowly to focus

There were more standing ovations at the 132nd General Assembly, held at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont. in June, than assembly regulars remember from previous years. A discussion on sanctuary gained a little heat; there were admonitions to remember the Sabbath, concerns about declining givings to Presbyterians Sharing and questions about why seven commissioners from the Eastern Han-Ca Presbytery did not show. Still, and despite the usual battles over money and history, this was a genial gathering.

But read between the lines and something interesting comes into view: serious discussions on the role of lay leadership, further support of healing and reconciliation with Aboriginal peoples, impassioned response to ecumenical and inter-faith visitors and, though most commissioners were caucasian there were several representing the many nationalities and cultures within the church. Subtle changes that have been transforming this church for years came a little more into focus.

And the moderator, too, represents this changing church: Wilma Welsh became the first lay person and fourth woman to hold the position and the second in as many years. A native of Guelph, Ont., Welsh chose Partners in Mission as her moderatorial theme, building on her experience in world missions.

Amy MacLachlan spoke with the in-coming and out-going moderators. Here is some of what they said:


Wilma Welsh

Wilma Welsh

My hope is that the church will have an exposure to mission. It's not my intent to preach sermons, but to share the story. We're a very caring and supportive church, and we have lots to share with the world. I think our perspective is valued by the government because we don't speak on everything, so when we do speak, I think the government listens or at least acknowledges us … The church's challenges refer to my theme, in helping the church look out rather than in.

As a layperson in the church, you always hit the glass ceiling. I was one of the first women elders to be ordained in 1967. I think I broke through the ceiling! If I had my life to live over, I'd do the same thing. I really believe I was called to serve as a layperson, not as ordained. This has always been a calling for me, never a job.


Jean Morris

Jean Morris

A year ago, there was a sense of anticipation. There was excitement, but it was also daunting. I wasn't sure what was ahead for me and not sure of the contribution I would make or what God would make through me. There's also running through that a sense of gentle or subtle confidence that there was a call for me to respond to; a confidence that this was a ministry I had been called to do. I was not sure how the themes I chose would work out. I knew they were the right ones for me in this office; I just didn't have a sense of how it would be at the end. So to have had the experience with non-parish based ministries, I saw the fruit of those in the people I met. I know now there are many in those ministries that don't fit into our structures because it's not easy to say how they fit. So to go and say we know you're here and we're thankful for what you do, there was a sense of connection for me and for them with the whole church.



The opening worship featured a large choir from various local congregations, with a Baptist choir director, as well as trumpets, percussion, organ, guitar and a shofar, a Jewish trumpet made from a ram's horn.

The happy assembly

Sixty speeches, much laughter, some befuddlement BY TED SIVERNS

I didn't know General Assembly could be so much fun," said Moderator Wilma Welsh as the 132nd General Assembly adjourned until next year. That was not the first time that the word fun was voiced though occasionally it was with a murmured: "Are we here for fun?" Still there was wide spread agreement that this was indeed a fun assembly.

The name Presbyterian is often used to mean the exact opposite of fun. Frank McCourt's best selling memoir, *Angela's Ashes*, is but one example of where the denomination is commonly thought to be on the scale that measures humour:

> "Another thing we noticed," said Philomena. "You have a very odd manor. And it gives us a very uneasy feeling. 'Tis that sneaky little Presbyterian smile." "Och," said Malachy, "it's just the trouble I have with my teeth."

Why fun at this assembly? It may be that we now realize that we are not responsible for the entire world and that God will continue even if we don't. It relieves a lot of tension when you realize that you are the servant and not the master. People of faith have always had a perspective that has allowed quiet humour or boisterous laughter in both good and bad times. (Remember the dying theologian whose friend checked his feet and said: "No one has ever died with warm feet." To which the theologian replied: "Joan of Arc did.") Humour accompanies faith; it does not oppose it.

We laughed a lot at General Assembly 2006. We laughed at words befuddled and motions confused and at least some of the 60 speeches. (Statistics thanks to Richard Sand, the winner of the 2006 Reticence Award.)

Business was easy to follow thanks to the Book of Reports, the briefing sessions, the excellent sound system, visual aids and helpful leadership. The setting at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont., worked well. The local arrangements committee was well-organized with travel arrangements, special events, etc. The Monday night banquet demonstrated that many (most?) of the commissioners preferred to talk to one another over dinner rather than to listen quietly to the music.

Most of the business was either the usual attention-getting motions or matters that were important and helpful but not controversial. This was not so with the recommendations concerning sanctuary for refugees. The debate was polite but intense and for the most part, I delightfully report, theological. Even the loyal addresses were properly theological as the General Assembly indicated loyalty to "queen and country," subtly reminding our rulers that they are not God, and carefully addressed the Prime Minister about important issues that need attention.

Next year? One commissioner wished that there was an opportunity to discuss Canada's opposition to Taiwan's desire to be part of the World Health Organization. I wonder if there could be a current issues corner where such matters could be registered. I wonder if we couldn't distribute something like *Metro* or *24 Hours* newspapers so that commissioners would more easily keep up with current news including events in Caledonia and Iraq.

Next year? One of the commissioners indicated that five days of General Assembly taught him more about the denomination than did three years at seminary. Could we have all second-year theological students attend in a non-voting capacity? An increase to the budget provided to the Committee on Church Doctrine would also be helpful as that committee with very limited resources tackles important and fundamental theological issues.

Next year? It may be time to consider how we might continue to meet yearly for the fellowship and education which is important to our small denomination while at the same time considering only half the reports. Requiring all boards and committees to report every year is counterproductive to the completion of the work that has been assigned by the assembly. Perhaps one-half of boards and committees would report one year and the other half would report the following year. It is also seems evident that concluding the assembly earlier and by a fixed time—say noon on Thursday—would save both time and money.

This year we kept the minutes and lost the hours (Milton Berle) but we did so with considerable laughter. This was indeed a happy assembly. – *Rev. Dr. Ted Siverns is Director of Presbyterian Formation at Vancouver School of Theology.*

Touching India's untouchables

E.H. Johnson recipient serves people living in atrocious conditions

BY AMY MACLACHLAN

Karuna Roy, this year's recipient of the E.H. Johnson award, has devoted her life to working with untouchables—people who are outcast from society, driven away, rejected. After 20 years working with the Leprosy Mission in India, Roy turned her attention to a new sort of untouchable. "People with HIV are driven from their homes, and suffer and die in the wilderness," said Roy during an address to the assembly. "God is the power that is enabling me to serve in this role. The situation is grim and bleak, but God has planted us in the right place to serve such people under atrocious conditions."

The E.H. Johnson award is given to people who are "on the cutting edge of mission." As the creator and coordinator of the Church of North India's HIV/AIDS education program in the Synodical Board of Health Services in New Delhi, Roy raises awareness about the disease, educates people on protecting themselves and helps reduce stigma associated with HIV. She has held this position for 10 years, and concentrates much of her work on youth and young people, taking her message to schools. However, she helps all infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS, and touches the lives of everyone from parents to prisoners to commercial sex trade workers. She also heads up a program working with these sex workers in small villages where prostitution is sanctioned by the men of the villages.

"It is hard for me as a woman to talk about sex and AIDS and condoms," she told the assembly. "What I need is strength, and that I get from you."

She told the story of a young woman who once had a bright future. But after being continually sexually abused by an uncle, who was sleeping with other women as well, Shruti tested positive for HIV. She was withdrawn from school, and her family moved to a different village, as her parents feared that the devastating news would spread. Her uncle subsequently tested positive for the virus, as did the family's maid. The maid's husband was also infected. All are dead.

"It is these stories that give me strength. I learn from these incidences and I take that to others," Roy told the *Record*. "It's hard because these people are close to my heart and then they disappear. It's not easy, but it's my job and I suppose I will do it as long as I live."

This was Roy's fourth trip to Canada. She was at General Assembly last year as an ecumenical visitor. She has visited 29 congregations in the PCC, calling this country her "second home" and telling the assembly that the church is close to her heart. Roy and the Church of North of India are supported by International Ministries and Presbyterian Word Service & Development.



Karuna Roy was honoured for being "on the cutting edge of mission" with the E.H. Johnson award. Roy founded the Church of North India's HIV/AIDS education program.

She urged the assembly to remember India in prayer. "India stands on the threshold of devastation," she noted, saying that although official figures list 5.2 million people as living with HIV/AIDS (in a population of 1.2 billion), the figure could easily be doubled, as many cases go unreported.

In thanking Roy for her work, Rev. Rick Fee, General Secretary of the Life and Mission Agency, commended the problem of HIV/AIDS to those gathered. "Please, this is not an Indian problem, or an African problem. It is our problem; a Canadian problem. But the church is responding. We are having an impact."

The E.H. Johnson award honours the life, work and missionary spirit of Dr. E.H. (Ted) Johnson.

Updates on pensions and benefits

CONGREGATIONS WILL HAVE TO PAY health and dental premiums only during the first six months of a vacancy as of July 1st. A 1988 decision held premiums for 12 months. The Pension and Benefits board will review this on an annual basis. The estimated loss of revenue of about $105,000, or about 2.2 per cent of the total benefit plan premiums, may eventually result in increased premium amounts.

There was much debate about the use of undesignated bequests for the pension fund. Nay-sayers argued that undesignated bequests should be used for various projects and ministries of the church, and not to fund pensioners' income. Two overtures asking that either 10 or 20 per cent of undesignated bequests go to the pension fund were referred back to the board.

One million dollars would be needed for a one per cent cost of living increase, something the board did not anticipate having available. It recommended instead for pension plan members who are facing financial hardship to consult with the Benevolence Committee and for those not yet retired, to the Norman M. Paterson Fund for Ministerial Assistance. A third overture requesting annual cost of living increases was also referred to the board. This would make the pension plan fully indexed for inflation. The board recommended to not grant this request, reporting that the practice has been to grant an increase only in years when an adequate surplus is available. About $2 million would be needed to offset an annual two per cent inflation increase, calling for an increase in pension contributions of about $1,700 per member. All three overtures were referred back to the board, asking that it consider how indexing of pensions can be achieved and report back to next year's assembly.

The board did report, however, that as to the authorization given by the 2004 assembly to grant a cost of living increase to pensions, pensions which have been in course of payment for at least one year to retirees, spouses and children will be increased by 1.6 per cent effective Jan. 1, 2007.

The assembly agreed to not pay the costs of health and dental coverage for pensioners through the Pension and Benefits board. An overture asked that all retired members of the pension plan receive this benefit. The cost for such coverage would be about $1.5 million annually. There are currently more than 800 retired members in the pension plan, with about 300 of those purchasing the health and dental coverage. – *AM*

Assembly supports healing and reconciliation

GENERAL ASSEMBLY showed its support of the church's healing and reconciliation initiatives by deciding that any funds saved through the overall residential schools settlement between the church and Aboriginal peoples be used for healing and reconciliation purposes only.

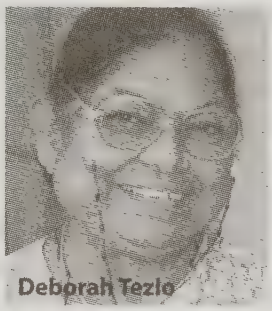
The motion stemmed from the fact that the cap for liability in the church's agreement with the federal government towards residential school settlements was recently decreased. In April, the cap dropped from $2.1 to $1.32 million, thanks to a more favourable agreement given to Roman Catholic entities that were also involved in the schools.

Rev. Stewart Folster of the Saskatoon Native Circle Ministry asked if any leftover funds could also go towards the church's existing native ministries. He did not feel he received a definite answer.

Rev. Gordon Haynes, associate secretary of Canada Ministries, stated that Native ministries already receive the second largest amount of funding with grants totaling more than $450,000 in 2006. Haynes said the only way to increase funding would be to increase givings to Presbyterians Sharing, or to discontinue grants to other ministries. Therefore, funding will remain the same. The assembly agreed with this response.

Several commissioners seemed disappointed in this decision. Jim Smith, Presbytery of Westminster, said that the church's Native ministries "are doing wondrous work", and that thanks to them, many First Nations peoples are now saying, "I trust the church." The assembly then carried a new motion dealing with the remaining $400,000 in the Healing and Reconciliation Fund, 75 per cent of which is to be spent on program costs for the church's new healing and reconciliation program (see the May 2006 *Record* for details).

The assembly also agreed that the church will recognize the National Day of Healing and Reconciliation by designating the Sunday in the church year before the designated national day (May 26th) as Healing and Reconciliation Sunday. – *AM*



Deborah Tezlo

'God is helping us to help others'

"There was not a single Christian in our area when the first missionary came in 1897. He started teaching, preaching and healing as he was a medical doctor. As the work expanded, the PCC sent many missionaries. If you had not sent your missionaries, I would not be standing here, and we would not be Christians; you taught us the love of Jesus Christ. There are 14 congregations in the area, and one hospital, three schools and two community health programs. We see about 44,000 patients per year. The aim of the institution is to proclaim the word of God, so everything is done with prayer, and God is healing … God is helping us to help other people."

– ECUMENICAL VISITOR DR. DEBORAH TEZLO, CHURCH OF NORTH INDIA, BHIL FIELD

Overtures, requests, presentations, approvals

Some of the proceedings of the 132nd General Assembly

• The International Affairs Committee presented global public health as its second theme for the church. It follows last year's focus on water as a sacred gift—both of which are based on "building the common good." This year's theme deals with issues like accessibility of medicines, clean water and sanitation.

• The government will be asked to look at the current patent system for medicinal drugs and at new ways of promoting health research and access to medications.

• Congregations and presbyteries will be requested to draw attention to the Make Poverty History campaign and encourage support of the initiative.

• A request from the Committee on Theological Education for increased representation on Assembly Council was referred to a joint working group made up of four representatives each from CTE and the council, plus an independent facilitator. They will discuss the possibility of increased membership and the underlying issues that are said to be hampering the relationships between the two bodies.

• The assembly approved an agreement between St. Andrew's Hall at the Vancouver School of Theology, and Regent College, a trans-denominational evangelical school of theology in British Columbia, that will allow joint study towards a Master of Divinity from Regent and a VST diploma. Normally, students from a non-Presbyterian college hoping to be ordained in the PCC are required to take another year and a half of study at one of the three Presbyterian colleges. Requirements such as being a member of the PCC, attending a Presbyterian congregation during study and undergoing psychological testing will still apply.

• Seven of 10 commissioners from the Eastern Han-Ca Presbytery did not attend assembly, and could not be reached for an explanation (although the presbytery clerk faxed an apology at assembly's end, noting that many elders are first-generation immigrants and are unable to be away from their businesses for days at a time).

• Concerns about language barriers and making the assembly's proceedings accessible to all led to an additional motion to make arrangements for Korean translation at the 133rd and future assemblies.

• *The Presbyterian Record* responded to an overture questioning the magazine's right to publish names of ministers involved in allegations of wrongdoing. Ian Fraser, convener of the *Record* board, noted that publishing such names demonstrates an "openness and transparency in how we as a church need to operate, and in doing so, is how all parties are best served." The assembly approved the *Record's* practice of publishing these names, and the editor's ability to make such decisions.

• The assembly decided, against the wishes of the Committee on Bills and Overtures, to grant an overture from the Presbytery of Newfoundland asking to place a particular retired minister (who has been in the presbytery for 10 years, is familiar with the people and the congregations, and whose presence will save others from being flown in for presbytery meetings) onto its constituent role.

• The assembly instructed the Assembly Council to review the declining amount of dollars available to Canada Ministries (which generally comes from Presbyterians Sharing) and to look at ways in which this funding can be increased.

• Much debate surrounded how the church should be spending its money and whether or not it should be sitting on a projected $1,000,000 surplus for 2007. Rev. Peter Bush (Presbytery of Huron-Perth) asked the church to "act with boldness" and spend the surplus on the church's AIDS campaign, the enhancement of international ministries and the starting of new Canadian congregations. "The day of the rainy day fund is over; it's time we use the resources to do the ministry of Jesus Christ," said Bush. The Assembly Council debated the issue on its own, and reported back regarding the financial implications. It responded that in order for the council to meet its financial obligations to the church (and to be able to remedy any future downturns, such as dramatically reduced givings to Presbyterians Sharing) the motion should be defeated. The assembly agreed.

• The assembly decided that Assembly Council does indeed have a "prophetic role" in discussing and determining issues facing the church, saying, "Because…listening and discerning what God is saying to the church is one of the main functions of the council, we believe the use of the phrase 'prophetic role' is appropriate and summarizes well what the council does and should be doing."

• The assembly referred a recommendation back to the Clerks of Assembly on allowing ruling elders to act as interim moderators of congregations. The clerks advised against ruling elders taking this position, but the assembly wanted further study of the issue. The recommendation responded to an overture from 2005, which noted that some presbyteries have many vacancies and few ordained ministers, putting increasing demands on ministers' time. The clerks argued that changing this would be contrary to the church's polity and doctrine of ministry, since an interim moderator is more than an administrative role. He/she administers

sacraments, moderates session and "is in every legal and pastoral way the minister of that congregation." To allow ruling elders to complete these tasks would be to blur the lines between elder and minister.

• The assembly re-affirmed the use of commissions as well as committees to deal with conflicts among ministerial staff. Committees are appointed by a court and report back to that court with recommendations, while commissions are also appointed, but are normally given the power to issue and the authority to make decisions without referring back to the appointing court.

• The clerks of assembly, in consultation with moderators of former General Assemblies, will facilitate a process for acquiring a perpetual symbol of the office of moderator, to be presented next year.

• Each session and/or congregational Christian education committee is encouraged to study "Our declining Sunday schools" and "What can be done about declining Sunday schools?" from the Education in the Faith department and take at least one action recommended there.

• The assembly agreed to not grant an overture from 2005 that asked the Clerks of Assembly to offer proposals on how the church can change its understanding of membership to be more relevant to modern society. The overture noted that many parishioners are active and committed to a congregation, but have no desire to become communicant members. Previous assemblies have addressed this reality; seeking for changes to the way adherents are viewed and what they can and cannot do within the church's courts. The status quo has been maintained in the past, and it was again this year.

• A report concerning the laity, this time on developing standards and pay scales for lay staff, will be sent to sessions, presbyteries, synods, ministerial lay staff persons, CTE, the three colleges and the clerks for study and comment by Dec. 1, 2006. The interim report was created after surveys were completed by lay staff who reported on their duties, hours, job descriptions and current remuneration.

• A report on congregations with two or more ministers and the relationships therein will be sent to sessions, presbyteries and the joint task force on theology and ordination for study and comment by Dec. 1, 2006. There are 36 congregations (or four per cent of the total) with multiple ministers, according to the 2005 Acts and Proceedings.

• A report on defining and setting standards for lay missionaries is also being sent to the church for study and comment by March 1, 2007. The main proposal is the creation of Presbytery Commissioned Pastoring Elders, who are ruling elders commissioned by presbytery to provide pulpit supply and pastoral leadership. An educational component would be required. There was some debate regarding whether or not this was creating another tier of ministers, but the report assures the church that it only "extends the ministry of ruling elders, and does not initiate a new order of ministry nor institute a permanent set of arrangements."

• PWS&D is taking a lead role in this summer's International AIDS Conference, held in Toronto on August 13-18. It will help Canadian churches host ecumenical and faith-based participation at the conference. A Christian pre-conference will take place on August 10-12.

• As givings to Presbyterians Sharing begin to flat-line and likely decline, the assembly adopted the need for presbyteries, sessions and teaching elders to provide strong, enthusiastic leadership by interpreting and educating about Presbyterians Sharing and by encouraging congregations, through prayer and financial support, to participate in the mission and ministries supported through Presbyterians Sharing.

• During the year of Sabbath, every congregation, session and minister is encouraged to participate in at least one spiritual retreat that is designed to help the participants reflect on their spiritual pilgrimage and walk.

• The 133rd General Assembly will be held in Cambridge, Ont., in the presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington, in 2007. The following year, the assembly will meet in Ottawa.

Unity is in Christ

"We have to revisit the issue of unity, not only for us in Ghana but of the universal church. By unity, we are not looking for uniformity. It is primarily a unity of relationships and intent and purpose of His work that Christ is much more concerned about. Followers of Christ live as one body, enjoying each other and living as a corporate entity, and gifts and abilities are harnessed. The unity in love that Christ prayed for transcends time and space and gender and culture."

– ECUMENICAL VISITOR RT. REV. DR. YAW FRIMPONG-MANSO, MODERATOR, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GHANA

Mutual respect

"One of the beneficial side-effects of interfaith work has been how much the knowledge of the other enriches us all while confirming each of us in our own commitments and beliefs. Today we speak of mutual respect and understanding that doesn't devalue one covenant in favor of another ... We commit grave errors when we try to judge the faith of the other by the principles of our own beliefs."

– INTERFAITH VISITOR RABBI DOW MARMUR, RABBI EMERITUS, HOLY BLOSSOM TEMPLE

They're not victims

"After Sept. 11th, there have been some changes in Afghanistan. Today, women are working and have positions in parliament. But in reality, this is a very small number of women, who don't even constitute one per cent of the population. Two out of three girls do not go to school, so literacy is a big problem. Ninety-nine per cent of girls do not know their husbands before they marry. Only 12 per cent of Afghan women have access to very basic health care. Most women are still confined to their homes. But despite difficulties, they do not behave as victims." – INTERFAITH VISITOR MS. ADEENA NIAZI – AFGHAN WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION

For a good time, go to assembly

BY BETHANY WOODS AND ALYSON GRAHAM


Alyson Graham and Bethany Woods

Honestly, going in I was pretty sure I was going to need to amuse myself during the sessions. Accordingly, I went armed with gum, highlighters, a water bottle, a pad of paper and lots of pencils for doodling. It's not a surprise that I filled nearly 25 pages of my notebook, but no one is more surprised than I that it is full of notes, not drawings. There are a total of two doodles, each about one centimetre in diameter, in the entire thing. This is a big deal. In order for me not to be doodling I have to be very interested in what's going on. Somehow, the highest court of The Presbyterian Church in Canada held my attention as its commissioners debated and voted throughout the week. Because of the support of the commissioners, I even found the courage to go to the microphone and speak to an issue that was being discussed.

For me, the highlight of the week was the Young Adult Representative presentation on Friday morning. Thursday night, we stayed up late planning a skit that was to portray our impressions of the week. It was so much fun. We chose to portray the many specific procedures and guidelines that allow GA to proceed smoothly. In a 20-minute skit, the YARs managed to break (or exaggerate) nearly every rule, procedure, and guideline in the book. The presentation, needless to say, had everyone in the court laughing and joining in as we yelled "Name!" to everyone who came up to speak (inside joke).

I am so grateful to my home presbytery of Algoma-North Bay for sending me. My experiences at GA have helped me gain a greater understanding of the Presbyterian Church and I hope to attend again as a full commissioner someday. *– Bethany Woods is from Corbeil, Ont., in the Presbytery of Algoma and North Bay.*

When I first got off the plane in Hamilton, Ont., I was, to say the least, scared. I didn't know what was to come ahead in the following week. To make things worse I was the only member that came from my presbytery of Pictou, N.S.

However, while waiting for my bags I ran into someone holding a sign that said General Assembly. I started to calm down when I saw his welcoming smile.

Once we arrived at Brock University, St. Catharines, everyone was extremely hospitable. It made the stay away from home seem like home away from home. Once I got settled I started to meet some of the other young adult representatives. There weren't very many of us so we had to stick together, 16 in total out of the 300 plus who attended.

On Sunday we had our opening worship and first sederunt. Near the end of that night I thought to myself, "This isn't going to be that bad." It seemed to go by quickly; little did I know that was only the commissioner's warm up for the week. As the week went along, I started to learn so much more about the work of our church. I didn't realize the amount of support that is provided to Presbyterians of Canada but also to Presbyterians and other denominations all over the world.

The thing that struck me most was the words of the guest speakers. They were so passionate. When I listened to them I could hear the emotion in their voices. Ms. Karuna Roy when she spoke about HIV and AIDS, Dr. Deborah Tezlo when she spoke about the Presbyterian work expanding in the Bhil region, and many others. The passion and dedication they have towards their work was so inspiring for me.

On a lighter note I also learned that Presbyterians know how to have a good laugh, love to eat amazing meals and snacks and also love to clap. It just goes to show that we appreciate the larger things in life but also the smaller ones that usually go unmentioned. *– Alyson Graham is from Scotsburn, N.S., in the Presbytery of Pictou.*

Congregations may offer sanctuary to refugees

AFTER HOURS OF DEBATE and several defeated amendments, General Assembly agreed congregations can offer sanctuary to an asylum seeker whose claim for refugee status has been rejected and who faces a risk of persecution if returned to his/her country of origin. While making a decision, a congregation should consider the following steps: 1. have an independent review of the evidence provided by the asylum seeker that confirms the risk; 2. have exhausted all of the legal and political resources as outlined in the statement from Justice Ministries; 3. have followed the decision-making procedures of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The assembly also decided that Justice Ministries will prepare guidelines for a congregation to consider as it discerns the implications of offering sanctuary.

"The decision to offer sanctuary will be a difficult decision," concluded the report from Justice Ministries. "The duty to protect may take precedence over the law if the individual is at risk of persecution."

During the lengthy discussions, commissioners argued whether or not the church should follow the law, or risk legal recourse and be loyal to Jesus Christ and his admonitions for social justice, love and compassion.

Rev. Elias Morales, minister at North Park, Toronto, a Spanish-speaking congregation that works closely with refuges, was passionate about this topic. "I came to Canada as a refugee," he said. "I was incarcerated three times back home and tortured. Life should not be measured by legalities."

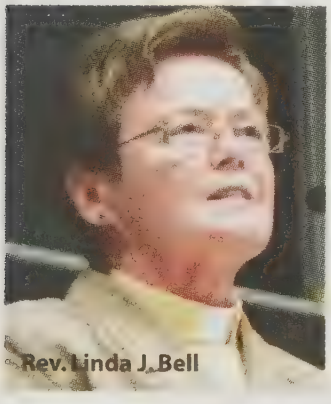
Roger Sage, Presbytery of St. John, referred to *The Book of Forms'* document, Declaration of Faith Concerning Church and Nation, which says the church should follow the laws of the land, but when there is a conflict, we are to follow our Lord.

The concept of sanctuary dates back to the Old Testament, and was formally sanctioned in 1951 by the United Nations. Canada ratified the convention in 1965. Today's laws fall under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, created in 2002.

The problem came to the forefront in June 2004, when then-Minister of Immigration, the Hon. Judy Sgro, criticized churches that were providing sanctuary. Church leaders met with Sgro, arguing that there would be fewer refugees in sanctuary if an appeal process was in practice. Sgro declined to make the change.

Following this, an appeal was launched by KAIROS, a social justice agency supported by the Presbyterian Church. It garnered 25,000 signatures and was presented in the House of Commons in spring 2005. The government again denied the need for a merit-based appeal process, saying there are other measures a claimant can take if his or her claim is rejected.

Session is responsible for deciding to offer sanctuary, but presbytery can veto the decision if it will cause division and strife in the congregation – *AM with files from Justice Ministries*



Rev. Linda J. Bell

40th Anniversary of Women's ordination

"There were tears and intense loneliness. My election as Moderator was made public on April 1st,1992. The next week, [just before Good Friday, I received] a letter that contained a very serious death threat, along with much derogatory name calling and profanity. There were accusations about my unsuitability to be a moderator of the Church and serious attacks on my moral character. The unsigned author said that he/she would "get to me" where I lived in McDonald's Corners, Ont., long before the Assembly meeting in June, or failing that, she/he would be at the opening of Assembly to kill me then.

"I was afraid. But more than this I was overcome with such a sense that somehow I was going to be a source of great embarrassment to the Church that I love, to the Lord whom I love and long to serve—perhaps even of shame.

"Our national office wasn't open until Tuesday morning. Thursday evening I wept, wondering if I should withdraw, wondering how I could go about withdrawing.

"On awakening—somehow God worked in my heart and soul as I slept—on awakening, I realized that the first "anything" would need to shoulder this kind of thing and that for whatever reason God and you were asking me to step up." – *Rev. Linda Bell, the first female moderator of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, speaking to the assembly.*

A fuller appreciation of this momentous anniversary will appear next month.

Growth in China

"There are about 20 million believers in China, 2,700 pastors, 27,000 pastoral personnel, 18 seminaries, Bible schools and training centres in China. I feel called by God to contribute to Chinese theological education, so the number of Chinese theological teachers will increase and there will be more pastors to serve our church. Knox will enrich me emotionally, theologically and spiritually, so I can return to China to help them grow more deeply in love and service of Jesus."

– ECUMENICAL VISITOR MS. XIPING JIN, CHINA CHRISTIAN COUNCIL

Faith and welfare

"It is the compelling testimony of our faith that love, compassion, and selflessness have transformative power to elevate humanity toward a community of sustainable human and environmental harmony; and yet it is the tragic experience of people the world over that the ready availability and endemic misuse of small arms rebuffs love with acts of hatred, smothers compassion with indifference to the suffering of others ... that is inimical to the welfare of others."

– MISSION PARTNER ERNIE REGEHR, CO-FOUNDER, PROJECT PLOUGHSHARES

Faith and prayer distinguish us

We are so involved in busyness and business, we may have simply run out of time

BY STUART MACDONALD

Were Joe McLelland's words prophetic? Are they words we need to listen to today?

The *Record* published excerpts from Joseph McLelland's Why Our Pond Is Lukewarm—an address originally given in 1965. Reference was also made to Pierre Berton's *The Comfortable Pew*, also 1965, and to McLelland's 1967 Congress address, Blueprint for a New Model, which was published in the *Record* almost 40 years ago. Last month's *Record* featured a contemporary reflection by McLelland.

Were these prophetic words?

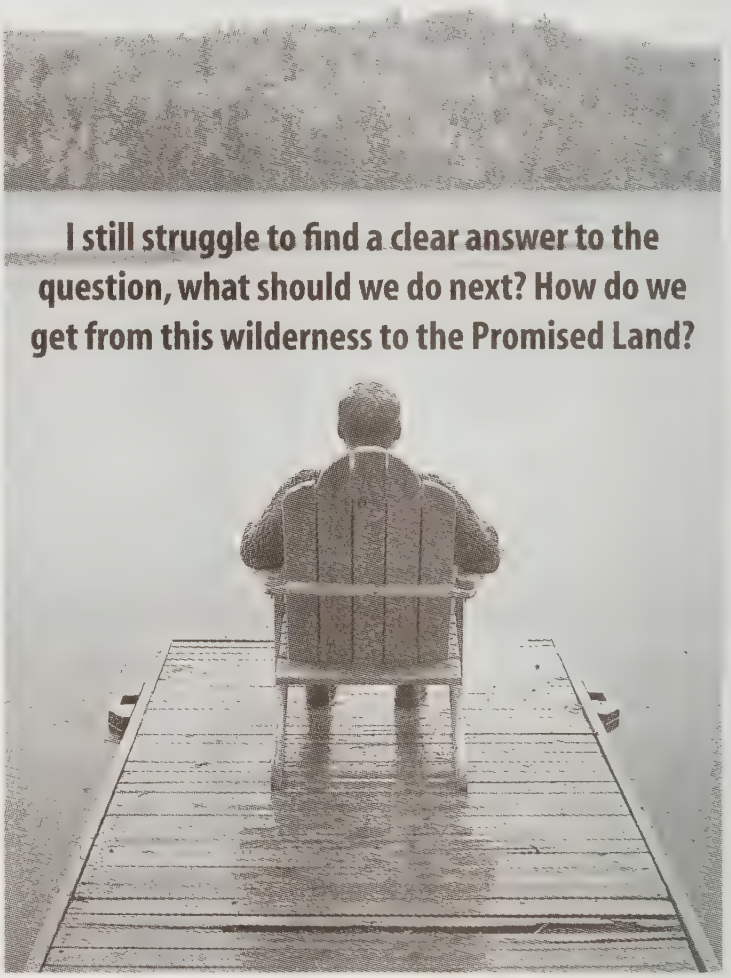
Prophetic can mean predictive—telling or predicting the future. Prophetic can also mean, as we see in the Old Testament, speaking a perceptive word to the biting issues of the day.

Why Our Pond Is Lukewarm was prophetic in the second sense. It spoke directly to issues in 1965. Specifically to a then debate about how Presbyterians should be ecumenical. Forty years later, one can say the position McLelland promoted won. We are broadly ecumenical, not speaking only to those who hold to the Westminster Confession the way that we do.

However, Pond was not prophetic in the sense of predicting our future. Nor was the later, Blue Print. Each work reflects the dissatisfaction and incredible desire for change within some quarters of the church in the 1960s, but neither predicted what would happen next—or up to our time.

This is hard to see. One of the strengths of Pond is the incredible use of images: A lukewarm pond; the long shadow of church union (1925); 40 years in the wilderness. These are great images! And some of the phrases remain noteworthy and compelling: "I believe that we are dangerously close to loving The Presbyterian Church in Canada more than our Lord Jesus Christ." Who doesn't read that and say "Amen?" This is what I find both wonderful—and frustrating—when I read and re-read these addresses. There are so many images. We view the address as relevant, if a particular image, or even several images, captures our imagination. We remember what came true—or seemed to—or what was (or is) particularly meaningful to us. What we forget are the other images, which don't seem as helpful; because, overall it is hard to make out common themes.

Despite numerous readings, I (and others) have yet to find the blueprint in Blueprint For a New Model. Critique. Provocative statements. Some anger. All are clearly there. But at the end of the day, what were we being called to do? The same could be said of Why Our Pond is Lukewarm. Despite some wonderful images, what is the solution or plan? What are we to do? The pond remains strangely murky.



I still struggle to find a clear answer to the question, what should we do next? How do we get from this wilderness to the Promised Land?

I found myself asking the same question as I read last month's The Sound of Invisible Trumpets. Again some wonderful phrases: "The Gospel is an alien Word driven into world history by three nails." (Amen.) Theology and good works, faith and action do matter, as McLelland rightly reminds us. As much as I love individual phrases and specific images in Trumpets, I still struggle to find a clear answer to the question, what should we do next? How do we get from this wilderness to the Promised Land?

Maybe we shouldn't try. Maybe the wilderness is the correct place to be.

At times of immense change, it is often in the wilderness that people of faith have received the insights they need to live in that changed world.

We live in one of those times of immense change, a change as great as the one nearly 1,700 years ago, when the church moved suddenly from being persecuted to being accepted.

And so it was, as Christianity became the state religion of the Roman Empire, St. Anthony moved into the desert. And it was from the desert that a new way of being Christian emerged.

The new way was a way of prayer. Christian life centered on prayer and those who sought it in its purest forms sought quiet in which to resist temptation and pray.

For almost a thousand years in Western Christianity, solitary monks and those in communities formed the heart of Christianity. Monks still do in Eastern Christianity.

Faith and prayer were central.

A stress on action came later. St. Benedict and St. Francis founded religious orders to do things in the world. There was a need. But this trend, affirmed at the time of the Reformation, has only accelerated since then, and to the exclusion of prayer. The height of activist Christianity has been over the last 150 years, as Victorian Christianity transformed Christianity into something one did. Or conversely, one showed one's faith by what we didn't do—drink alcohol, gamble, smoke, use earthy language, dance, or whatever the particular list might be.

This trend continues to dominate Christianity. We show we are Christians by what we do (recycle or go to anti-abortion protests) or what we don't do (buy certain corporate stocks or support gay marriage). We have become activists. And in a world of activists where there often are numerous service clubs or organizations involved in countless good works, what distinguishes us? Faith and prayer. But, if we have been so involved in meetings and committees, in busyness and business, we may have forgotten this—or simply run out of time.

We live in a moment of profound transition. Broad cultural support has changed suddenly to indifference. Christendom has popped like a balloon, and we are left wondering what to do. We can tinker—change the music, change the order of worship, advocate for this or that moral position of the church—but I'm not sure any of this responds to our reality. We have to live as Christian people in new circumstances, which we, at least we Western Christians, have never faced before. We live in an indifferent culture, one that is not going to support our values or our views.

I have no confidence in my prophetic abilities, either to make some pithy insight into the world today or predict the future. I am not sure what we do next. However, a good question to ask is whether we should stay in the wilderness. Is this a time to wait for God's direction? There is a time for action. There is also a time for prayer. Both are needed—but at this time, we need more prayer. Not telling God what we think about divinity, or what we think we are called to do. Instead, prayer that involves listening.

Out of the Wilderness? Yes—but only once we've been there long enough to listen.

Rev. Dr. Stuart Macdonald is the Director of Basic Degree Studies and Theological Field Education, and Associate Professor of Church and Society at Knox College.

At times of immense change, it is often in the wilderness that people of faith have received the insights they need to live in that changed world



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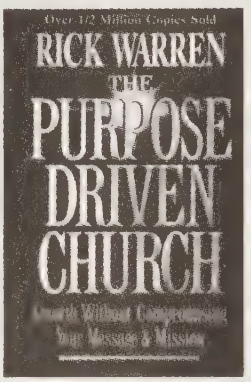
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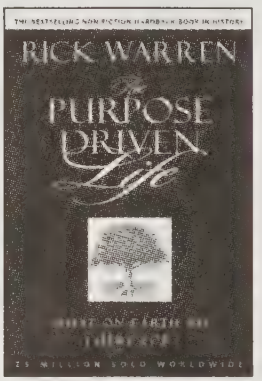
The purpose driven process

A church asks some hard questions and unearths some uncomfortable answers

BY RUTH ANN SIGURDSON

The Purpose Driven Church
The Purpose Driven Life
Rick Warren
Zondervan





For months we had discussion times after the morning worship service and half the congregation remained, old and young, those new to the church and those who had attended all their lives. During the course of study of these books, the churches of Zion Willowdale and St. Andrew's, Valley Center, Alta., amalgamated, changed their name to Willow-Valley, wrote a mission statement and discussed a future building. Not bad! But it wasn't easy. With Warren's books as guides, we had to re-examine all our assumptions. Three areas were challenging to us.

Why does the church exist globally and locally? When we looked at the church in a global sense it was for the purpose of sharing the love and gospel of Jesus Christ. We all said that was of course the right answer, but when it came to Willow-Valley it was a little different. The consensus was that our church exists because of the need to gather and worship, as it did for the people 100 years ago.

It serves the community and has strong doctrinal teaching. Everyone agreed that this church was a place that made them feel good and welcome; fulfilling personal needs such as friendship and belonging. It was small and therefore people knew you on a deeper level. It also offered a service to them and our families in weddings, funerals, baptisms. The question was more difficult to answer than we had anticipated because we soon came to realize that locally it was to meet our own needs and globally it was to meet the needs of others. Some could agree in theory that was the case, but were not willing to actively go beyond the walls of the church. The discrepancy brought much discussion forward. It would require a change in attitude and that was scary.

The Five Purposes of the Church. Of the five purposes of the church—worship, ministry, evangelism, fellowship and discipleship—which do we emphasize? Once again there was unity in the answer, for all the groups agreed Willow-Valley did quite well in worship, ministry and fellowship. And when we went on to consider what kind of church we represent and why, again the group was unified in its answer: The Family Reunion Church, which is a church that focuses on fellowship and is shaped by people who are highly relational, love people and spend most time caring for the needs of one another. This church is has great music, a rural/urban mix of people, a place to include community people, Presbyterian roots. It is not staunch! A place to learn God's word and acknowledge the growth of others.

It was noticed that because most of us know each other so well, it can be a bit intimidating for new visitors. In our church, visitors do stand out and that can cause some people to be uncomfortable. Again there was discussion on the discrepancy between wanting to reach out to new people while maintaining the security of the familiar. Without intentional invitations to those in the surrounding community, things would not change. It was the commission of the church and to go and make disciples, yet we preferred that people come to us.

Styles of Evangelism. Confrontational, Intellectual, Testimonial, Interpersonal, Invitational, Serving. We had fun putting ourselves into a category and putting others into one as well! We decided that Willow-Valley's style of evangelism is a combination of interpersonal, invitational and service—all having to do with relationships, all having to do with meeting the needs of others. One neat thing was that we realized we have been evangelizing without knowing it! We are out there in the community spreading the gospel without identifying that as what we were doing! Most saw themselves in the serving category because they got to do, not talk, their faith.

This process was one of the most challenging processes the church has ever done. Feelings run deep and my very strong suggestion to any congregation who chooses to use these books is to make sure everyone is included all the time, either by participating in the discussions, or being updated in the services, by letters or phone calls.

Ruth Ann Sigurdson is the Lay Minister at Willow-Valley, Red Deer, Alta.

Granola Christianity

An otherwise excellent study guide is a bit too politically correct

BY RYK BROWN

Experiencing the Heart of Christianity – A 12 Session Program for Groups
Tim Scorer
Wood Lake Books

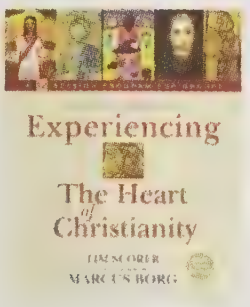
Tim Scorer has produced an excellent study guide and DVD combo for small groups who want to study Marcus Borg's, *The Heart of Christianity*. But it's a granola guide.

The Heart of Christianity is one of the most important Christian theology books to have been published in the last 100 years. I would put Borg alongside Reinhold Niebuhr, Paul Tillich and Karl Barth in terms of his importance to modern Protestant theology. As Peter Gomes of Harvard Divinity School said, "If Marcus Borg didn't exist we would have to invent him."

Borg's book is not only revolutionary in content; it's actually causing a real revolution in progressive North American churches, both liberal and conservative. He is probably the most articulate voice in the emerging church movement, writing at a level accessible to any reader, without the usual ivory tower style of a university theology professor. And he speaks to the heart of our struggles to be Christian in a post-911 world. Borg's book is a must-read for any modern Christian.

It is inevitable that this book would inspire, almost demand, a study guide. Not because one might require a study guide to get through it, but because once you've finished reading it you just have to talk to someone about it! What better place to have that discussion than in a small group at church?

Into that need steps Tim Scorer—a United Church minister from Penticton, B.C., and former director of the Maranatha Retreat Centre. Scorer is a gifted small group facilitator and knowledgeable about adult experiential learning styles. He brings his expertise together with his passion for Borg into this excellent study resource.



Scorer's book is a leader's guide with 12 study sessions, including help on how to lead a small group—suitable for anyone from the least to the most experienced group facilitators. The guide comes with an accompanying DVD with video segments by Scorer and Borg himself. The DVD also includes masters for any printed material needed for the course. The package is therefore complete.

The quality of this resource is excellent, but it is extremely granola, just too politically correct. The clearest example is Scorer's use of the Lord's Prayer, which he refers to as The Prayer of Jesus, presumably because Lord is an oppressive word. He offers a modern paraphrase of the prayer written by Jim Cotter that begins, "Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver..." in order to avoid the politically incorrect "Father."

Scorer is a big fan of tactile learning and pays attention to creating an aesthetic atmosphere for the group sessions—including the use of water, bread, candles, stones, "smells and bells," etc. While this approach may go over well in a United Church retreat centre in B.C., I can just see some Hamilton steel workers running from the building if I used Scorer's lesson plan here in southern Ontario.

Also, Scorer gauges each session to be about two and a quarter hours, which is just too long. Each session needs to be halved. This is really a 24-week program.

Scorer presents the reader with a full and rich approach and invites the reader to adapt as needed to his/her context. I think the book/DVD is excellent and well worth the price. I plan on using it in my own congregation, but I also plan on taking Scorer's advice and adapting it liberally to fit.

Rev. Ryk Brown is pastor at Aldershot Presbyterian, Burlington, Ont., and author of *The Presbyterian Cell Church*.

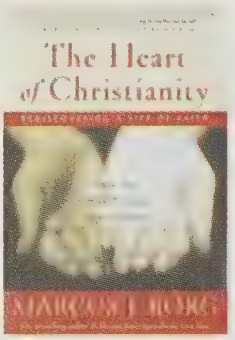
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Renewal on the road of faith

A study group chews on Marcus Borg's emerging paradigms

TERRY SAMUEL

The Heart of Christianity
By Marcus Borg
Harper Collins



Approximately 25 of us at St. Giles', Sarnia, Ont., engaged ourselves in a study of Marcus Borg's *The Heart of Christianity*, over a period of 10 weeks. For some of us the going got a bit chewy partway through, especially when Borg got theological (which led us into broader philosophy). To help us along the way we followed the study guide, *Experiencing the Heart of Christianity* by Tim Scorer. Scorer's approach emphasizes the heart component of Borg's study in that the process was one of study, discovery, discussion and worship as a faith community. One of the highlights of Scorer's approach is the use of short video clips in which Borg presents various positions and offers his own personal story.

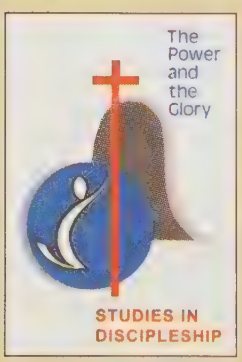
It is important to note that Borg is not about the business of dismantling traditional Christianity. He makes this point strongly several times, usefully, because some in our group asserted their preference for what he calls "the traditional paradigm." Nonetheless, a disturbing truth (for some) underlying both Borg's book and our experience in the larger church (if not life itself) is that human nature tends to draw us in the direction of certainty and security in what we believe. Never mind if what we believe isn't good for us; it may even be wrong for us! If we believe it, we cling to it.

It was Borg's emerging paradigm which captured the enthusiasm of others in the group. One participant expressed delight at being given a deeper appreciation of certain Bible stories and biblical premises, something akin to viewing an iceberg and suddenly realizing that there is much more than what appears on the surface. This paradigm, while affirming many traditional perspectives and understandings of Christianity, allows for new perspectives based on different models.

When I was studying theology in Knox College in the early '70s, many professors were suspicious of metaphorical interpretations; nonetheless, Borg's discussion is thoughtfully and gently couched, sensible and often convincing. While affirming the basic tenets of the Christian faith—the Bible, God, Jesus, being born again—he allows for freedom and exploration in how we embrace these foundational rocks. His intended audience is people who have long travelled the road of faith and who find themselves tired or disillusioned, doubtful, in need of renewal. He also speaks to younger people who long for more reasonable and meaningful ways to hold the ancient parables, stories and myths of holy scripture.

Again, Borg affirms strongly the gifts of traditional Christianity over the centuries: faith, hope, love and compassion. His vision in this book though is that there is more. Borg sees the Christian life as full of relationship and transformation at both the personal and social levels. His is an attempt at making our faith more accessible, more relevant, more enlivening.

Rev. Terry Samuel is minister at St. Giles', Sarnia, Ont.



The Power and the Glory: Studies in Discipleship
By Rev. R. Sheldon MacKenzie

I have personally accused Rev. MacKenzie of keeping me in the church with these lectures, so, let me share it with others: It was 1979, Pre-Assembly Congress; I was in my late teens, just about to start university. A secular world of liberal free-thought awaited me. But, no! Sheldon's lectures spoke to me, particularly the second on power. I recognize it now as the Spirit once more interfering with my life, messing with my plans. Rereading the lectures I learn anew their power to teach, to guide. They are a boot to the backside, a meditation on our vanities; a special reminder of our role as disciples in the world Christ left us in His name. The book itself, however, is unnecessarily humble: amateurishly produced, with no publisher named and in need of both a copy editor and designer. Write me and I'll forward your book orders to the author. – *Andrew Faiz, afaiz@presbyterian.ca*

An insight into small churches

A lively book about lively ministry in low membership congregations

BY JIM CZEGLEDI

Where 20 or 30 are Gathered—Leading Worship in the Small Church
By Peter Bush and Christine O'Reilly
The Alban Institute

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is a denomination of small membership churches. Approximately 40 per cent of our congregations have fewer than 50 at worship. The future of the church depends on these congregations, on their health, spiritual development and ability to function. This book is an insightful look at the joys and challenges of small church life. The authors are passionate advocates of the importance of training and equipping lay people to plan and lead worship.

The book is written in a lively style that uses stories to illustrate key points.



Bush and O'Reilly walk the reader step by step through the components of a Presbyterian worship service. They describe the best worship practices of small churches in a variety of locations—rural, small town and city.

Ministry in smaller membership churches is very different from that of a larger church, and this book demonstrates a thorough understanding of the nature and personality of the smaller church. *Where 20 or 30 are Gathered* will help smaller congregations to understand their uniqueness and strengths and contains excellent suggestions for ways to minister with their members and their communities.

This book is ideal for clergy and for lay people who lead worship. It deals with worship leadership and with ministry concerns when a church is without a settled minister. The issues that arise when a church is part of a multi-point charge are also addressed. The authors provide a model for the small church of the future largely based on training gifted lay people.

Jim Czegledi is the associate secretary for Evangelism and Worship, Life and Mission Agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

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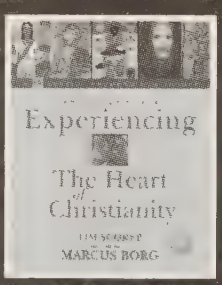
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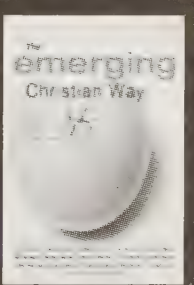
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Laity lead revival

Clergy not necessary for Temiskaming to keep moving

BY AMY MACLACHLAN



Mackay Presbyterian Church, Timmins, gathers for communion. From left, front: Norman Johns and Bertha Johns, lay ministers, with Doris Grebenjak, Neill Herron and Michael Fournier. Middle: Julie Karls, Valerie, MacNab, Organist, Marjorie Boyd, Lynn McColeman, Barbara Herron. Back: Irene Theyers, Ron Theyers, Anne Jensen.

Four years ago not one of the six charges and seven congregations in the Presbytery of Temiskaming had a full pulpit. One of the smallest presbyteries in the church, with 301 members in 2004, was having a near-death experience.

A three-year pilot project to use a regional minister who supports lay leaders in the churches has "given congregations hope that they're going to survive and continue, and it has given them goals to work towards," says Bruce Taylor, presbytery clerk. "It's encouraged them to be self-reliant and to find gifts within each congregation that are going to see them through."

The initiative, which includes Knox, Cochrane, St. John's, Kapuskasing, St. Andrew's, Kirkland Lake, and MacKay, Timmins, is supported by Canada Ministries. Rev. Jean MacAulay leads worship one Sunday of the month at each of the four congregations, while lay leaders take on the majority of the preaching and pastoral work, save for sacramental events. "The lay minister knows the congregation, and they look after programs and the day to day affairs," said MacAulay. "Ultimately, it means ministry can continue even when a congregation can't hire a minister."

Canada Ministries worked with the presbytery to figure out a way to keep these four churches open, beginning the process of creating the regional ministry model. And much to the presbytery's delight, the national church decided to redirect some of its earlier funding (of approximately $50,000 per year) to this new and unique initiative.

The regional ministry model isn't perfect. Ed Charlton, the summer student minister at St. John's, Kapuskasing, noted that the travel time between congregations, which is at least two hours, makes the model less than ideal. Norman Johns, who along with his wife Bertha lead MacKay, Timmins, as a lay ministry team, agrees that improvements can be made. He suggests regular workshops for the entire presbytery, sponsored by the national church, specifically targeting those in lay ministry. He mentioned online courses as another possibility.

And, developing specific standards for lay leaders is a necessity, according to MacAulay. "Right now we're working on setting up roles and functions of the lay as opposed to the regional minister. This is new, and we're learning as we go."

Adding another three-year term to the program is another potential improvement, as the first term was spent getting the program operating fully, making adjustments and corrections and determining what works best. Johns said a second term would enable the lay leaders to become more proficient in their roles, and to build upon what was established at the outset.

St. Andrew's, New Liskeard, was established in 1895 when the Temiskaming area was a vast, little-known frontier. Today, it is the presbytery's largest congregation with a membership of 110 and a weekly attendance of about 80. It is housed in the oldest church building in the area, built in 1903.

Worship is a blend of traditional and contemporary, featuring a choir, a 1929 Woodstock pipe organ, a four-piece

PHOTO: (THIS PAGE) DON PERRY

band and PowerPoint. The congregation offers three Bible studies, and a men's study group that has spearheaded a renewed interest in mission. After looking at St. Andrew's mission statement, the men began to think of ways to live it out more fully. They looked through *Something Extra*, the mission project catalogue produced by Presbyterian World Service & Development, and decided to focus on Central America. The congregation invited Rev. Jim Patterson, a retired but long-time missionary to El Salvador, who is helping members formulate a long-term mission program with that country. Rev. Joe Reed, a recently retired church liaison to Central America, is also lending his expertise.

"It's helped us to stop focusing on our own problems and start focusing on others," said Rev. Janice Hamalainen, minister at St. Andrew's. "We understand mission as developing relationships, not just giving things. It's a two-way street, and we have a lot to learn from them too."

Mackay, Timmins, (est. 1943) represents 24 families. It has experienced some growth in the last year and a half, thanks in large part to numerous community outreach projects and a newly opened diamond mine in the coastal area of James Bay. "The discovery of the diamond mine has begun to turn the tide," said Norman Johns. "Those members who remain are dedicated and faithful followers of Jesus Christ, and we're committed to achieving church growth." Mackay also holds a Christmas bazaar that's so renowned in the community that the mention of it usually identifies the church to the citizens of Timmins.

In spite of its small size and limited resources, St. John's, Kapuskasing, is also strongly committed to mission. The congregation contributes a substantial percentage of its total income to several mission projects, including one in South America spearheaded by a member of the congregation who travelled to the area. St. John's shares its church building with a Baptist congregation, and some people attend both the Baptist and Presbyterian services.

The congregation of St. Andrew's, Kirkland Lake, has concentrated on local missions, visiting members and others in the local nursing homes and hospital. St. Andrew's shares services with the nearby United Church during the summer months. Its lay minister, Harvey Delport, was the guest speaker at the 2006 World Day of Prayer service in Kirkland Lake, and also took part in a Good Friday service that was shared by the congregations of Englehart, Tomstown, Kirkland Lake and New Liskeard.





Young Presbyterians sing at a worship service at St. Andrew's, New Liskeard, while women gather for food and fellowship at Tomstown Church's Easter tea.

Knox, Cochrane has an average weekly attendance of 10 people. The town itself suffers from a fast-falling population. Because of limited financial resources, the congregation focuses on local mission projects.

The two-point charge of St. Paul's, Englehart and Tomstown is presently being served on a supply basis by Rev. Blake Carter. St. Paul's averages 30-40 people for Sunday service, and has recently started two Bible studies. A popular outreach and fundraiser for the church is a monthly soup and sandwich lunch in the church hall, catering to local business people and to farmers doing their weekly shopping in town.

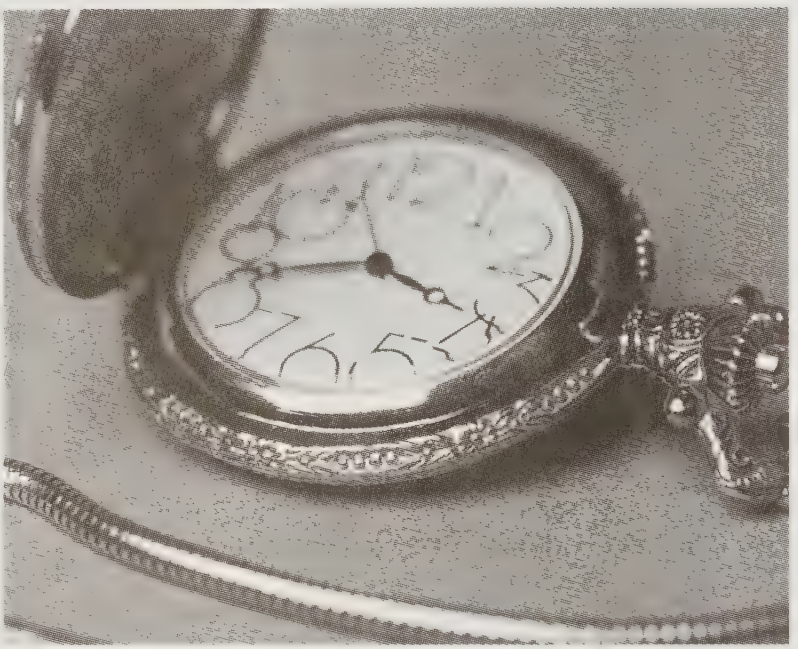
Tomstown is a small rural church with a weekly attendance of about two dozen. The congregation is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. Being the town's only church, it serves as a community centre for the township and has an active and involved congregation. In the past year the members have made the church fully accessible, and have constructed a small addition to house a second entrance to the church hall. In the midst of all this activity, the church's water system was abruptly ordered shut down by an inspector from the Ministry of the Environment. Because so much of their revenue is derived from church suppers and other activities in the church hall, this was a significant setback. Within a very short time, however, a new water well and system were installed thanks to an interest-free loan given by one of the church's members. The $15,000 cost has now been paid off through the congregation's hard work and commitment.

"We don't know if the regional ministry will work or not, but we're praying these churches will become strong enough to carry on," said Hamalainen. "It increases your faith when you have to rely on God because you know you can't do it on your own. You work, you pray, and you carry on. We're stepping out in faith."

All in good time

Sometimes, you just have to be willing to wait

BY GWYNETH WHILSMITH



"All in good time!" my husband used to say. "All in good time." In our younger years this drove me crazy because I'm one of those impetuous people who make snap decisions, wondering why in the world anyone would waste time mulling over something that you already knew was the right thing to do.

On the other hand, Art never made a quick decision in his life. "If you just wait," he advised me, "everything will work out the way it's supposed to." He saw no reason to rush into anything. And for him it worked, well, most of the time.

Many years ago, the musical *Camelot* had its opening in Toronto. We were ardent fans of the stars—Richard Burton, Julie Andrews and Robert Goulet—and it seemed a wonderful chance to attend a big-show opening. When we phoned for tickets, they were all gone and I sagged with disappointment. "Never mind," Art said, "we'll drive to Toronto anyway. We'll get tickets. All in good time."

We went from ticket office to ticket office, always getting the same reply, "There are no tickets nor cancellations for any of the performances." Wearily, trudging up Yonge Street, I was more than willing to give up. "Let's go home. This is hopeless." "You give up too easily," Art scolded, "we'll find tickets. All in good time."

We were about to pass a music store, when Art wheeled in, pulling me along. I trailed reluctantly behind as he strode to the ticket booth at the back of the store. He's wasting his time, I know it! The agent was on the telephone but when she laid down the receiver and heard Art's request, she smiled broadly, "Well, you are in luck. The person I was speaking to just cancelled two reservations!" Art grinned at me. "I told you. All in good time—you just have to be willing to wait."

I have to be honest and say that many of the quick decisions I was so positive were right, turned out to be wrong even when I was sure that it was God leading me. Of course, Art's plans also backfired occasionally. In the past, we loved trips to England to visit his relatives. In our later years, when both they and we were getting older, I urged him to make one more trip before it was too late. "We'll do it," he always answered, "all in good time. We're still young!" Well, now, unfortunately, I'm making plans to go alone. Still, on the whole, it was a philosophy that worked better than my impetuous way of doing things.

Now that I'm a widow, there are so many decisions and I miss his careful, thoughtful way. After a year of being alone, I put my house up for sale and began looking at condominiums. I found one I simply loved. Although it was a bit pricey, I told myself it would hold its value. Besides, it was perfect for me. Advised not to own two homes at one time, I still called the agent and placed an offer on it. It so happened that this occurred on a weekend when I was going away so I didn't have time to sign the document or drop off the cheque.

It gave me time to seriously reconsider. Suppose my house didn't sell as quickly as I hoped? Suppose I had two sets of municipal taxes to pay, along with condo fees and the upkeep on two places? Suppose this went on for a year, or two? What would I do? I knew I'd be worried sick. Common sense clicked in. It was not something I wanted to deal with. When I arrived home, I telephoned the agent and cancelled the deal. Yes, I was sorry I wouldn't be moving into that beautiful condo, but the pressure was off and I was *very* thankful. I thought of Art and his "all in good time."

Gwyneth Whilsmith is a contributing editor to the *Record*. This is the last of three articles on grieving. All three can be found on our website, www.presbyterianrecord.ca.

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Greener lawns need more mowing

Your lifestyle affects your values

I love reading road signs. Like the one welcoming you to Kettle Falls, Wash., the home of "1,255 friendly people and one grouch." In Hilt, Cal., a sign advises: "Brakeless trucks, use freeway." Along Oregon's winding coast, another warns: "Emergency stopping only. Whale watching is not an emergency. Keep driving." I pulled into a service station once. A bold sign proclaimed, "We have Mexican food. We have gas." But my favorite of them all is posted on an Alaska highway: "Choose your rut carefully. You'll be in it for the next 200 miles."



Laughter has no MSG, no fat grams or carbs. Laughter is low in cholesterol and the government still doesn't tax it. So let's fill our homes and our workplaces with laughter whenever we can

As a young father, I found myself in the rut of spending 60 hours at work each week, speaking across the country on weekends, and wallpapering the house at night. I had three small children and one wife, and I was in danger of getting their names mixed up; of becoming the grouch of Kettle Falls. Like the wallpaper, things were about to come crashing down. Before I knew what hit me, I was flat on my back. Burned out.

I was reading all the wrong signs. Signs like, "Give your kids the stuff you never had." I was stuck in the rut of believing that an ultra-busy schedule equals a productive life. Three liberating truths have freed me from that rut and turned our home into a place our family loves to be. I think we should plant them as road signs along life's highway.

1. The fruit of the Spirit is not lemons: In the midst of my burnout, my four-year-old pounced on me and tickled me. I didn't move. "Dad," he said, "you don't laugh so good anymore." That night I made a conscious decision to change. I began renting funny, wholesome movies. I bought a few cartoon books and explained the jokes to the kids. Within days, the difference in our home was noticeable. God is a God of joy. He has given us a built-in escape hatch for the pressures of life. It is our funnybone. Laughter has no MSG, no fat grams or carbs. Laughter is low in cholesterol and the government still doesn't tax it. So let's fill our homes and our workplaces with laughter whenever we can.

2. Even ants have time to attend picnics: Recently we bought a puppy. Mojo cost us $300, or $100 per brain cell. Sometimes she curls up on my lap, her tiny heart beating faster than you'd believe. But when she drifts off to sleep, it slows remarkably. They say the jumping mouse's heart beats 500 times a minute. During hibernation it slows to 30 beats per minute. I'm not recommending hibernation, but rest. The Bible tells us that Jesus often took a break. No one in history accomplished more, yet He did so without acquiring an ulcer. Rest allows us to recharge our batteries and reorganize our priorities. The Creator of the universe rested. So must we.

3. Even if you win the rat race, you're still a rat: Read enough road signs and we can't miss the huge advertisements telling us we do not have enough: "You don't drive a blue Mercedes like this one. You poor thing. You don't eat bronzed chicken in a perfect kitchen with perfect lighting and perfect children who laugh at all your jokes while the Labrador retriever lies at your feet flea-less and grinning."

One night my wife and I left our credit cards at home and strolled through a mall laughing at all the things we do not need. We found a cell phone that works underwater, alarm clocks that project the time on your ceiling in the middle of the night and gas-powered blenders for the backyard. We even found pants that talk. They say, "Zip me!" How times have changed since Daniel Boone said, "All you need for happiness is a good gun, a good horse and a good wife."

We don't have the big screen TV or the blue Mercedes, but we have what they can't sell. We are rich in relationships. Rich in memories. Rich enough to give some money away. And if we notice that the neighbour's grass is greener, let's remind ourselves that they have to mow it more often and their water bill is probably higher.

Phil Callaway is a popular speaker and the author of *Who Put My Life on Fast Forward?* He lives in Alberta with his wife and practices what he preaches. Visit Phil online at www.philcallaway.com

Clothed in joy

Jesus was noted as a partier and one who partied with outcasts and sinners

BY DAVID WEBBER

Where's Mom, Dad?" Chelsea had just poked her head into the 4x4 pickup that served as my summer office. She had a look of puzzled concern on her face.

"I don't know," I said, looking up briefly from the laptop computer that was plugged into the cigar lighter of the truck. "Man, it sure is peaceful today. It's just what I needed for all this writing I have got to get done."

"Dad! Mom's missing and you talk like you are enjoying the peace as a result of it. Really Dad!"

"Mom's missing?" I said. "How can that be? I think I saw her when I served toast in bed this morning. Yes, I distinctly remember a hand coming out from under the sleeping bag and snatching the toast and coffee that I trolled by its entrance."

"Yeah, well she went for her morning constitutional after you left the trailer and I haven't seen her since," said Chelsea. "Don't you think we should go look for her, Dad?"

"It depends on how long it's been since she went for her cra … I mean … her walk," I said, rubbing my chin.

"It was over an hour ago," said Chelsea.

Just then I could hear laughter coming down the trail from the outhouse. Linda rounded the bend in the trail with an even bigger than usual smile behind her eyes. "Hi guys," she chuckled.

"Had a good time at the outhouse, did we?" I said. "What took you so long? Chelsea was about ready to call out the pooper police."

Linda continued to giggle. "Thirty-five years of using Thomas Crapper's contraption and I never had that happen to me before. You know how the outside latch on the outhouse is loose? Well, I went in this morning with a little more enthusiasm than usual and as the door slammed closed, the latch spun and locked. I was locked in tight. I did my business and then tried to jimmy the lock. That didn't work, so I sat and thought for a bit. Then I started drumming on the walls with my hands and that attracted a pair of crows who were no help at all. I let go my best cattle drive whistle and no one seemed interested, so I sat down to think some more. Eventually I heard a woman walking down the gravel road past the outhouse. I called



'I went in this morning with a little more enthusiasm than usual and as the door slammed closed, the latch spun and locked. I was locked in tight'

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out to her. I could see her through a knothole looking all around, like it was God or someone who had spoken to her. I told her I wasn't God, just a lady locked in the outhouse. She scampered up the trail and rescued me. We both started laughing so hard I almost wet my pants right in the outhouse. The last time I saw her she was going her merry way down the road, staggering, she was laughing so hard. Ain't life a blast? If nothing else I brought some laughter and celebration into someone's life this morning."

We all had a good laugh with Linda about her experience and I went back to work whacking away at the computer. The girls disappeared into the trailer. As usual, I was working on something quite serious, but every so often I stopped and chuckled to myself about the morning's incident. I couldn't help myself.

Linda is one of the few people I know who would find joy in getting locked in an outhouse. She is noted for her contagious laughter, me not so much. When people first get to know Linda they think her infectious laughter is a nervous condition. It isn't, it is an extension of her faith. As a Christian, she is a laugher. I am a brooder. She makes people laugh; I suspect I make people brood. I think she is closer to Christ and His Kingdom than I am.

Whenever I think of Christ, I tend to create him in my own image. I think of him as a brooder, a stern preacher, a man with righteous anger. But a serious read through the Gospels reveals a man much broader than that, certainly a man of laughter and celebration. Jesus' first miracle was turning water into wine at a wedding party and you can be sure he wasn't there brooding. In Jesus' day, if you wanted serious brooding, you had to look no further than the Pharisees. To them, Jesus was not nearly serious enough. Jesus was noted as a partier, and worst of all, one who partied with outcasts and sinners. Over and over again we see Jesus in situations that were celebratory, situations of laughter and happiness. And in these situations he seems to be concerned with bringing celebration and laughter and happiness into lives that were often too short of them.

More than that, when Jesus talked



'Ain't life a blast? If nothing else I brought some laughter and celebration into someone's life this morning'

about his Kingdom he often compared it to a party, to a place of laughter and celebration. The Kingdom Parables are virtually teeming with festivity and merriment. The parable of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost or prodigal son all have the element of celebration and joy central to them. The parable of the children of the bride chamber challenges us: How is it possible not to celebrate as long as Messiah is come? The parable of the wedding feast compares the Kingdom to a celebration where those who refuse to celebrate and make merry will be replaced with those who will.

I could go on, but my point is that in the Bible, Christ and His Kingdom are full of laughter and celebration. And a central discipleship theme in the Bible is bringing these wonderful human dimensions into people's lives that are void of them. As a Christian, not only is it Christ-like to be a joyous and festive person, but it is a Kingdom orientation to conspire with Christ to bring these elements to bear in people's lives where brokenness, hurt and grief rule the day. "O Lord, be my helper! You have turned my mourning into dancing; you have taken off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy." (Psalm 30:10-11)

Rev. David Webber is a contributing editor to the *Record*. He is a minister of the Cariboo, B.C. house church ministry. His most recent book is *Like a Winter's Aspen: Embracing the Creator's Fire.*

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obituaries

ABBOTT, Gertrude (nee Lockhart), faithful member for half a century of the Livingstone Presbyterian Church in Montreal, departed to her Saviour in her 103rd year on March 2, 2006. Her cheerful devotion in the service of the Lord and her participation at worship services, Bible studies, prayer meetings and mission outreach events was exemplary. "Blessed are those who die in the Lord."

MARONEY, Mrs. J. J., aged 50, wife of Rev. Michael Maroney of First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont. Mother of Lora, Mary and Mabin. She touched the hearts of everyone with whom she came into contact as she spread God's love through all her gifted ministries.

GIBSON, Ross, April 11, 2006 in his 83rd year. Lifetime Member, Elder, Board Chairman and Trustee of Knox Cannington, Ont.

MULLIN, Violet Sophia LeGarde-Gibson, December 31, 1925 - May 21, 2006. Violet loved the Lord. Her life long ministry was devoted to children, whom she loved dearly. She taught Sunday School for 60 years. She helped with after school children's programs and children's mission bands. Her passion was particularly for children who were socially disadvantaged or handicapped. She would befriend these children and work with them individually to increase their own sense of worth as a precious child of God. Violet believed that if you brought up a child knowing the road that the Creator would want them to walk, that they would have a better chance in life. Violet treasured music, singing, and gospel hymns, and despite her own physical disabilities she was irrepressible and active.

Violet was an Honorary Life Member of the Women's Missionary Society of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Violet ministered with her husband James Alexander Mullin, a Catechist in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, between 1959 and 1979 in various locations within Canada. James and Violet had four children, William James, Margaret Ivene, David Sinclair and Ira Frederick Gibson, who are all actively involved in their churches.

Violet has ministered with her daughter, the Rev. Margaret Mullin from 1992-2006. She light-heartedly thought of herself as the "reverend mother". Violet was fiercely proud of her Ojibwe heritage, her aboriginal extended family, and her association with Anishinabe Fellowship Centre Worshipping Community (a ministry of Winnipeg Inner City Missions, The Presbyterian Church in Canada).

TAYLOR, Kenneth Denton, of Elmira, Ont., beloved husband of Margaret Jean (nee McKay), passed away peacefully on December 14, 2005 in his 92nd year following a courageous battle with cancer. Born in Cobourg, Ont., he graduated from the University of Toronto with a degree in electrical engineering in 1939. He then embarked on a 40-year career with Ontario Hydro.

Married in 1945 to Margaret McKay, he and his wife recently celebrated their 60th. Beginning as an Anglican choirboy, Denton became an active churchman in the Presbyterian Church, serving as church school superintendent, treasurer, elder (45 years) and informal greeter in Woodbridge, Burlington, Belleville and Elmira, Ont. He was also an active participant in his community through the Rotary Club and the Masonic Order.

Denton is survived by his wife Margaret, three children, Kenneth (Rene) of Calgary, Alta., Sherrill (John) Knight of Calgary and Marylu (Lawrence) Pentelow of Elmira, and eight grandchildren, Eric and Kara Knight, Alex, David Joanna and Shannon Taylor and Laurel and Steffen Pentelow. His family was always of utmost importance to him. He was a grandpa par excellence.

Denton made friends widely. Everyone he encountered in life remembered him as a classic gentleman—gentle, generous and kindhearted. His wry sense of humour was always punctuated with a smile and sparkle in his eye. The world was made better by this man.

Rate for obituary notices: $1 per word or $55 per column inch (the lower amount) plus GST.

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Equipped, enabled, empowered

Lay worship teams fill the void

BY AMY MACLACHLAN

When ministers are on holiday or maternity leave, at home sick in bed, or when the pulpit is simply vacant, congregations are missing a main ingredient for Sunday service. Not content to leave congregations without worship each week, the Presbytery of Cape Breton, currently faced with six vacant charges, found a solution in lay worship teams—groups of trained, educated and commissioned lay persons who conduct worship services for congregations in need. "Equipped, enabled, empowered," is their mantra.



Kirsty Sharp, secretary of the lay worship committee of the Presbytery of Cape Breton, hands a diploma of lay leadership to Mary MacLeod at St. Andrew's, North River Bridge, Cape Breton, during a service to recognize the graduates.

The teams were the vision of Rev. Dr. Floyd McPhee, who moved to Cape Breton in 2001 after retiring from Parkwood, Ottawa. While supplying at a small three-point charge, he noticed that Cape Breton's congregations were starting to thin. There was also a shortage of ministers available to handle pulpit supply. "So I told presbytery that we should train lay people to conduct services of worship," McPhee told the *Record*. "They said, 'Good idea—why don't you do something?'"

McPhee joined forces with Rev. Shirley Murdock, who recently succeeded McPhee as convener of the lay worship teams committee after he returned to Ontario. They consulted ministers, elders and laity, asking what they would like to see in the training initiative. The program began to take shape in 2002 and 13 participants, who had been nominated by their congregation's session and interviewed by the committee, began training the following year. They were divided into four teams, commissioned for service in 2004, and are now able to prepare and present entire services of worship (excluding sacraments) according to the doctrine and polity of the Presbyterian Church.

Every month, at least one team is busy conducting worship, and during summer months, or when ministers are away to attend national church meetings, all four teams are often in action. "It's surpassed our expectations," said Murdock, minister of her own three-point charge.

The training program, with classes held on weekends, covers five areas: biblical, liturgical, doctrinal, spiritual and interpersonal. Each team is assigned a clergy coach who helps them prepare for worship and discusses the evaluations given after the team conducts a service. The cost for training of $125 per person is split equally between the candidate, the sponsoring congregation and presbytery, and the congregation enlisting a team's services pays the same amount it would pay a supply minister.

Pulpit supply is especially challenging in Cape Breton, where 15 charges cover 31 congregations. Retired ministers, who often supply in other presbyteries, are almost non-existent in Cape Breton, making the challenge even more acute. "When a presbytery is full and being fed by ministry, you have to prepare for when you're not," said Murdock, speaking of the wise move to plan ahead. "You have to put something in place for when you're in need."

McPhee said there was an immediate response of people who had already been doing some lay preaching and wanted to be better prepared. He's pleased with the teams' success. "The genius of it is we work as a team from the beginning. It's not one person doing all the work. And having a coach to help all the way is important. By using lay people we can service congregations and they feel they're an important

Mission Knocks continued on page 45



Kirsty Sharp presents a gift to Rev. Dr. Clyde Ervine of Presbyterian College, Montreal.

Diary of an Olympic chaplain

Rambunctious singing can ruin a meditative hour

BY IAN ALEXANDER

Rev. Ian Alexander is a Church of Scotland minister and was a chaplain at the interfaith centre in the athlete's village in Turin, Italy. He kept a diary of his time there for the Record.



The Olympic Rings light up the stadium during the opening ceremony of the 2006 Winter Olympics in Turin, Italy.

Monday 6 February

An interfaith committee meets at the Olympic village for the last formal meeting before the games begin. The Mohammed caricatures controversy is in full swing. The two Islamic leaders arrive one hour late and are greeted warmly by the rabbi. The meeting begins and takes two hours—mostly because the members keep taking calls on their cell phone. Just as I get judgemental, my own one rings. Hoist by my own petard.

Timings of services are discussed. The Buddhist is anxious because his service of contemplation is at the same time as the Protestant worship. Although he is in the next room, he feels that rambunctious hymn singing would destroy his meditative hour. Everyone is sympathetic and the Protestant time is changed.

I go back in the evening to await the vast crowds coming for the Protestant Bible study. No one shows. The Romanian Orthodox priest turns up early and begins the service. For Orthodoxy, worship is an end in itself: to worship even with only the priest is normal. Lack of a congregation is of no great import—although he does have one: me, the Catholic priest and the volunteer minding the door. He chants and sings, sometimes accompanied by a man he has brought with him, kisses the cross and the icons, blesses the room by sprinkling water from a small dried bouquet of something (he later tells me it is dried basil; that in Romania it is used for sacred purposes while in Italy—he chuckles—it is added to tomato sauce to mix with your pasta. Each to their own.) I find it strangely moving. He blesses the three of us individually, shaking the basil leaves and spraying us with the water. I do feel blessed. He kisses my cheeks and I feel neighbourly, brotherly. This is surely what church is about. Where two or three are gathered…

Friday 10 February

Opening ceremonies take place tonight. Tickets can be as much as 800 euros. The church puts the events on the big screen and we watch them there.

Thursday 16 February

In the evening, to Torre Pellice for the annual bonfire celebration to mark the 1848 Edict of Toleration for the Waldensians. (The Reformed Church in Italy—founded in Lyon around 1175 as a movement of itinerant preachers, they adhered to the Reformation in 1532, having been variously excommunicated, persecuted, ghettoized, tortured and murdered by the thousands by various Catholic rulers in Europe. Miraculously they survived. They were given civil freedom in 1848 and recognized as a church in 1984… things take time in Italy. The religious freedom also included Jews.)

The moderator cleverly reworks the Olympic slogan, Passion Lives Here. Passion does live here, a passion for freedom, for justice, for human rights and human dignity; not just religious freedom, but also freedom from hunger, from want, from war, from tyranny of any sort.

PHOTO: JONATHAN HAYWARD/CP

'The Pope just visits your country. He is at home here'

Friday 17 February

I get back in time to go to ice hockey—one of the chaplains has been able to get some free tickets. It's Italy vs. Germany, so perhaps not the highlight of hockey prowess, but at least they are fairly evenly matched and it is a tight game. My colleagues have kept the Canada tickets for themselves!

Saturday 18 February

For the first time in Northern Italian Church history, all the Protestant churches have organised a day conference of lectures and singing to culminate with a Christian concert in the evening. There is a great buzz and people are really engaged. All this has come about because the churches have been working closely together over the past four years preparing for the Olympics. It is a positive result: Reformed, Methodist, Baptist, Adventist, Salvation Army all coming together. Guiseppe Platone, pastor of the Waldensian Tempio in Turin and head of the interfaith committee for the Olympics, is delighted and intends to follow-up with further joint endeavours with the minority Protestant community. It is important in a country where Catholicism is part of the social fabric. As one person reminds me, "the Pope just visits your country. He is at home here."

There is a group here from Vancouver to see how Olympic chaplaincy is organized in preparation for the 2010 games in Vancouver-Whistler. Mostly they are from the Salvation Army and have some experience in this type of organizational structure and sports ministry.

They are staying in the Waldensian guest house in Torre Pellice, the Vatican of the Reformed Church here. Until 1848 the Protestants were confined for hundreds of years to the mountains. They could not live any lower than Torre Pellice. After 1848, they built a church, Synod Hall, church offices, a school and cultural centre in this gateway to the mountains.

Sunday 19 February

The joint service of the English, French and Italian congregations is well attended. The Vancouver representatives give a brief presentation. As a Confession of Faith to recite together, I have abridged the Accra Confession from WARC 2004. It fits in with our theme of freedom. The whole service works really well and we are all pleased with the mix and the very good-sized congregation.

Saturday 25 February

Some of the teams have brought along chaplains and this seems to me a better way of doing ministry with the athletes—these chaplains can build relationships with the teams over years of accompaniment and be much more engaged in offering support than a random stranger sitting in an interfaith centre for two weeks.

Sunday 26 February

The closing ceremony is an extravaganza, and I am happy to have been invited. Full of action, music, fun as well as Olympic ideals (if you suspend your cynicism and ignore all the corruption at the heart of the IOC over the years) it is a magnificent farewell from Torino to the 20th Winter Games. After so much questioning and soul searching, the city really embraced the Games and gave a very warm welcome to all the visitors: the Italian people were full of enthusiasm and excitement during the 16 days of the games. And the city has looked great too—and what a fantastic buzz has been going around with all kinds of languages spoken and people dressed in their national colours—there were seas of red and white. The hope of many is that it will continue and Turin will develop and prosper for the future.

Mission Knocks continued from page 43

part of the church. I'm just thrilled to see the high calibre of services these people are leading."

Continuing education is an important priority for the teams. Seven members of the original 13 recently received their diploma of lay leadership from the Presbyterian College, Montreal (Cape Breton's program gives students 10 credits towards the required 20). They were presented with their diplomas at the college's convocation on May 11th.

Gary Grant, a member at Bethel, Sydney, used to think he'd have to wait until retirement to complete a college course. He was overjoyed when Montreal decided to take the college's training and education to Cape Breton. "What a blessing that was," said Grant, whose job at the telephone company and caring for his family keeps him busy. "It's certainly been a tremendous benefit to me. Any group of ordinary people can do it. Other presbyteries should know that it's doable! If anyone gets the chance to do this, go for it. It's pretty fantastic."

Although there are other initiatives involving laity and worship in the church, this program is the most comprehensive. Revs. Peter Bush, Knox, Mitchell, and Christine O'Reilly of Knox, Thedford and St. Andrew's, Watford, offer a travelling workshop for rural worship. They were part of Cape Breton's training program, whose visit was made possible with support from Canada Ministries.

"Presbyteries across Canada will eventually be faced with not really having a choice in this; laity will become a necessity," said Grant. "And when you put that necessity with a doable project, there will be huge benefits."

"We encourage people to make it their own," said Murdock, who thinks other presbyteries can learn from Cape Breton's initiative. "If a little presbytery like Cape Breton can do it, any presbytery can do it. It's a real possibility."

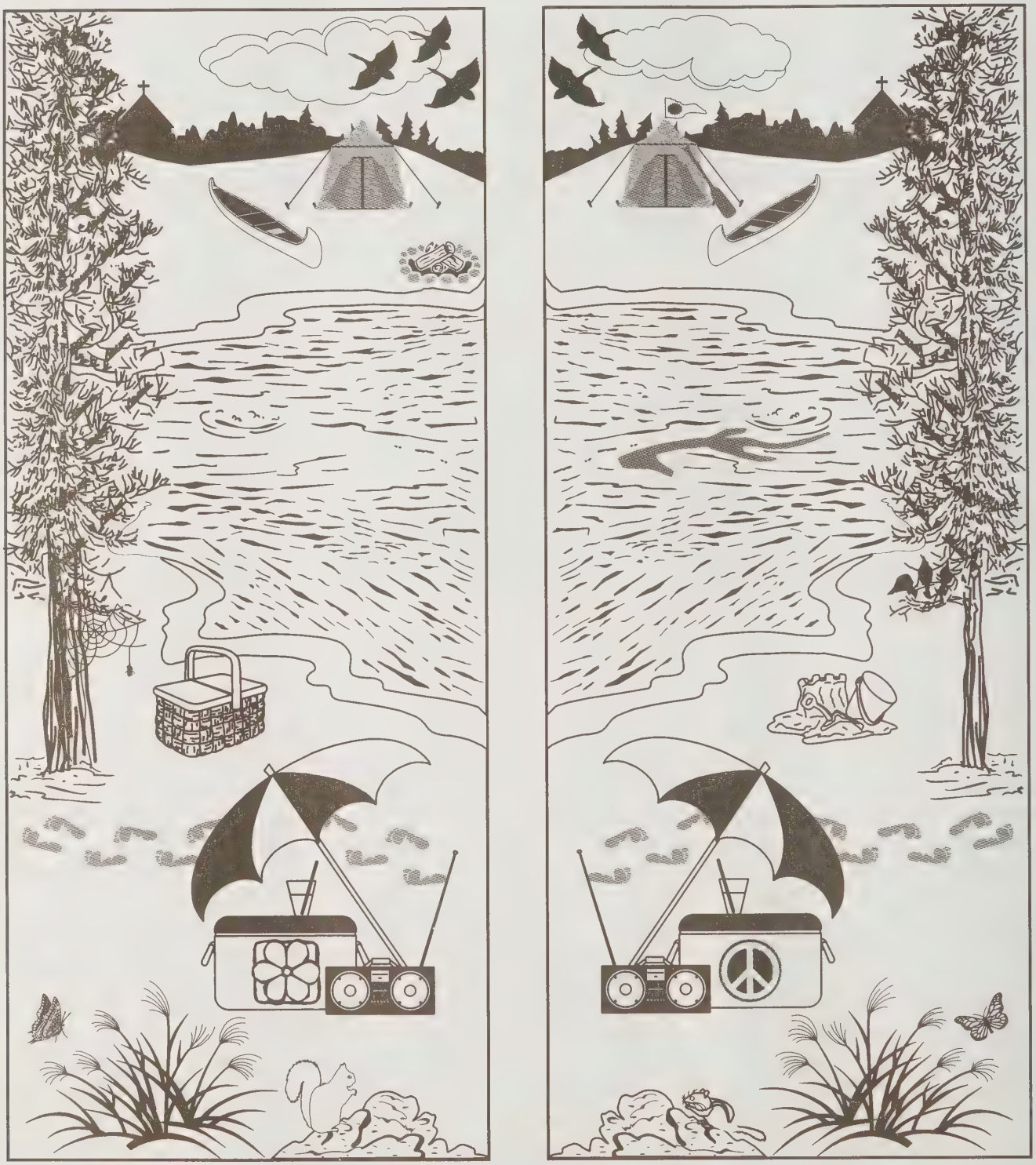
For more information or to request the services of the team (within the Presbytery of Cape Breton) contact Rev. Shirley Murdock at rev.sfm@ns.sympatico.ca or (902) 295-1301.

called to wonder

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MIRROR IMAGE

Compare the pictures below. At first glance, the picture on the right looks like a mirror image of the picture on the left. Can you find 12 differences? Solution on page 41.



The Lord will protect you now and always wherever you go. (Psalm 121:8, CEV)

To report a vacancy for the next issue of the Record please contact: Deborah Leader
Tel: 1-800-619-7301 x308 Fax: 416.441.2825 E-mail: dleader@presbyterian.ca
All notices of pulpit vacancies will be charged to the congregation: $8 a line, $40 minimum for a one-time insertion or $25 per insertion for four or more insertions.

Ministry Opportunities and Interim Moderators

New Church Development positions available through Canada Ministries; Contact Rev. Gordon Haynes, Associate Secretary; 416-441-1111 extension 258 for more details.

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Sunny Corner Pastoral Charge, N.B., St. Stephen's, Sunny Corner, St. Paul's, Warwick; Rev. H. Martyn Van Essen, 7 Hierlihy Rd., Tabusintac, NB E9H 1Y5; 506-779-1812; hmvanessen@hotmail.com.

Thorburn and Sutherland's River, N.S., Union; Interim Moderator Rev. E. M. Iona MacLean, PO Box 1003, Pictou, NS B0K 1H0; ionamac@eastlink.ca.

Woodstock, N.B.; St. Paul's New Interim Moderator Rev. Robert Adams, 1991 Hwy. 640, Hanwell, NB E3C 1Z5

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Inverness, Que., St. Andrew's co-operative with the United Church; Rev. J. B. Forsyth, 585 rue Principale sud, Waterville, QC J0B 3H0; 819-837-1475.

Kars, Ont., St. Andrew's; half-time position; Rev. Charlene Wilson, c/o St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church, 579 Parkdale Ave., Ottawa, ON K1Y 4K1; jc.wilson@bellnet.ca.

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Montreal, Que., Westminster Presbyterian Church, Pierrefonds; Dr. J. Vissers, 3495 University St., Montreal, QC H3A 2A8; 514-288-5256 extension 201; jvissers@presbyteriancollege.ca.

Pincourt, Que., Ile Perrot; Mark Farrell, Convener, Search Committee, 242 Fifth Ave., Pincourt, QC J7V 5L3; 514-453-4796; markim@ca.inter.net.

Vankleek Hill, Ont., Knox, Hawkesbury, Ont., St. Paul's; Rev. Ian MacMillan, RR 2, Cornwall, ON K6H 5R6; 613-931-2545; a3100@glen-net.ca.

Synod of Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda

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Cannington, Creswell, Wick, Ont., Open Door Cluster; Rev. D. A. (Sandy) Beaton, 32 Pine Point Lane, Port Perry, ON L9L 1B4; 905-985-4746; sandy.beaton@sympatico.ca.

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Toronto, Guildwood Community; Rev. J. P. Ian Morrison, 17 Earswick Dr., Scarborough, ON M1E 1C7; 416-265-0135; Ian.morrison@sympatico.ca.

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Toronto, St. Andrew's, Humber Heights; Rev. Garth Wilson, 155 Wychwood Ave., Toronto, ON M6C 2T1.

Toronto, St. Andrew's; Rev. Bill Middleton, 105 Wilson Ave., Toronto, ON M5M 2Z9; 416-485-4000; bmiddleton@armourgheights.org.

Toronto, St. John's; half-time ordained minister to work in a team ministry; Rev. Dr. Art Van Seters; 95 De Vere Gardens, Toronto, ON M5M 3G1; 416-932-0784; a.vanseters@utoronto.ca.

Toronto, St. Timothy's; Associate minister for English Service; Dr. Calvin Kim, B2-78 Finch Ave. E., North York, ON M2N 7J5; Telephone: 416-229-0599; Fax (during business hours): 416-229-0594; sttimprez@yahoo.com.

Trenton, Ont., St. Andrew's; Rev. Job van Hartingsveldt, 244 McMahon Ave., Kingston, ON K7M 3H2; 613-542-5579; strapark@kos.net.

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Warkworth, Ont., St. Andrew's; Hastings, St. Andrew's; Rev. Rylan Montgomery, PO Box 328, Colborne, ON K0K 1S0; 613-475-4675; rylan.montgomery@gmail.ca.
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Port Elgin, Tolmie and Burgoyne, Knox; Rev. Bill Vanderstelt, PO Box 280, Chatsworth, ON N0H 1G0; 519-794-0155; bvanderstelt@hotmail.com.
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Windsor, St. Andrew's; Full-time minister; The Rev. Scott McAndless, Interim Moderator, c/o Knox Presbyterian Church, 58 Erie St. South, Leamington, ON N8H 3B1; 519-326-4541; scottmcandless@sympatico.ca.

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Winnipeg, Westwood; Rev. Matthew Brough, Knox, 341 Eveline St., Selkirk, MB R1A 1M9; mcbroug@shaw.ca or Rev. Kevin Macdonald, St. John's, 251 Bannerman Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2W 0T8; mactamal@yahoo.co.uk.

Synod of Saskatchewan

Saskatoon, Circle West; Parkview; Rev. Annabelle Wallace, 436 Spadina Cres. E, Saskatoon, SK S7K 3G6; 306-242-0525; standrews@sasktel.net.

Synod of Alberta and the Northwest

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Calgary, St. Giles'; Search Committee, c/o St. Giles Presbyterian Church, 1102 23 Ave. NW, Calgary, AB T2M 1T7.
Edmonton, Strathcona Presbyterian Church, http://www.spchurch.ca; Interim Moderator Rev. Keith Humphrey, 8715 118 Ave., Edmonton, AB T5B 0T2; 780-477-8677; rvkrby@shaw.ca.
Lethbridge, St. Andrew's; Interim Moderator Rev. Frank Breisch, 1818 5th Ave. So, Lethbridge, AB T1J 0W6; andrewst@telusplanet.net.

Synod of British Columbia

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Comox, Comox Valley; Interim Moderator Rev. Elizabeth Forrester, 2408 Glenayr Dr., Nanaimo, BC V9S 3R7; 250-751-1544; eamfor@telus.net.
Sidney, Saanich Peninsula Presbyterian Church; Interim Moderator Rev. David Stewart, 633 Peacock Ave., Victoria, BC V9E 1B7; 250-478-1363; revdws@telus.net; mypage.uniserve.ca/~sppc/index40.html.
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Partners in mission

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As I pondered with what I would say in my first message to you as Moderator of the 132nd General Assembly, I decided to share with you a few reports received by the General Assembly this year.

I was reminded during the assembly that in 1966, 40 years ago, The Presbyterian Church in Canada approved the ordination of women to the eldership and to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament. For preparation for the question on the role of women in the church, congregations were invited to use a study book entitled *Putting Woman in Her Place*. I personally recall this publication being produced, as the final manuscript went across my desk to the printer. Another policy change that we saw in action this year was the 1995 decision that ruling elders and diaconal ministers were eligible to serve as moderator of the General Assembly. I was ordained as an elder 39 years ago, and this year as a ruling elder became Moderator. I give thanks to God for the many men and women who believed that women should be fully recognized within the church. It is my generation that has seen these major changes in the church's polity.

There were many highlights in this year's reports to the assembly, some of which you're read in this issue. See the complete reports of the 132nd General Assembly at www.presbyterian.ca.

It is not a surprise to anyone who knows me that I have chosen as my theme for the year Partners in Mission. During my moderatorial year I hope to share with you some of the ministries we have both in Canada and overseas. I look forward to visiting congregations across Canada to share the mission story as I have personally experienced it as a layperson and as a national staff person both in Canada and overseas. During visits to our overseas partners I often wished that that every member from the Presbyterian Church could stand where I was standing to help them understand more fully what a tremendous difference they make in the lives of people in the developing world. A little goes a long way! I was moved almost to tears in Costa Rica as I watched young children having dinner. Our givings to Presbyterian World Service and Development made it possible for these young children to receive three square meals a week. I thank God for your caring and your sharing.

'Mission lies at the heart of the church's existence. It is the work of the church, given to it by God, centred in the gospel of Jesus Christ and made real through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. Without mission, the church does not exist'

I want to quote from Education for Mission of the Life and Mission Agency's report to the General Assembly:

> In an Education for Mission congregational survey, a question was asked about the meaning of congregational mission and who is responsible for it. One person responded as follows:
>
> Our basic assumption, based on scripture, is that the whole church must be involved in mission. We therefore should not consider mission a hobby or a pastime in which to be involved occasionally or when we can spare some time. It isn't just a once-a-year preoccupation characterized by an annual mission Sunday or missionary conference. Nor should it be regarded as one of the many interests and departments of the church. Mission is not an option, it is a mandate. The whole church must be occupied with it.
>
> The respondent captures well the essential nature of mission for the church. Mission lies at the heart of the church's existence. It is the work of the church, given to it by God, centred in the gospel of Jesus Christ and made real through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. Without mission, the church does not exist.

International Ministries is in partnership with 29 agencies around the world. In Canada we share in special ministries such as ethnic ministries and with our first nations people. Let us not forget new church development. We need new churches if we want to grow. These ministries are possible because we share through our givings to Presbyterians Sharing.

Please continue to pray for the partners we stand in solidarity with, both in Canada and overseas.

We are commissioned to go and tell—tell the good news of Jesus Christ to all.

Blessings,





Moderator Wilma Welsh with E. H. Johnson Award recipient Karuna Roy of the Church of North India at General Assembly.

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Courtesy of Cassidy, age 7.

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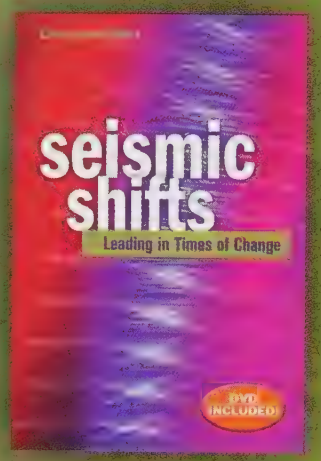
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PRESBYTERIAN Record
SEPTEMBER 2006



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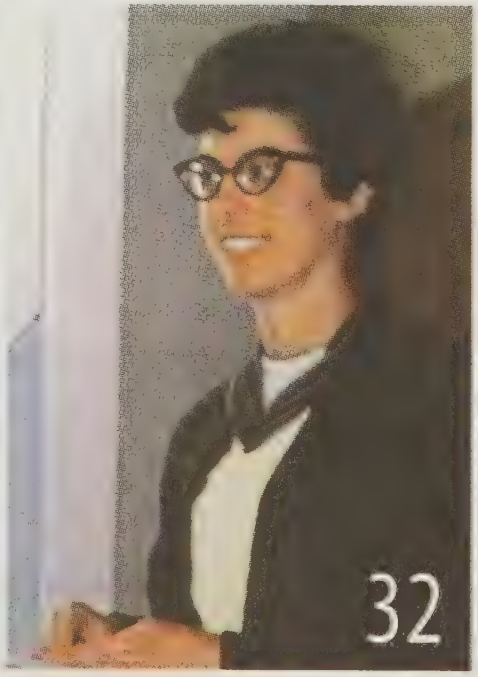
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On the cover: The simple, profound expressions of faith by those gathered for Canada Youth 2006. Photograph by Amy MacLachlan

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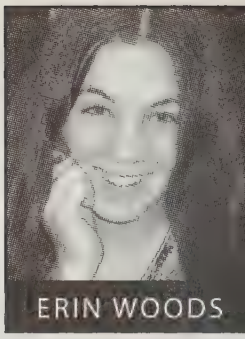
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ERIN WOODS
guest editorialist

We must stomach world hunger

This year my church's progressive dinner was scheduled during the 24-hour famine my youth group organized to combat world hunger. The nerve! So while nine youth and five adults were starving, the rest of the congregation was indulging in a five-course meal. *And* we had to sleep on a hard floor that night, *and* our youth band had to play in the service the next morning, when all of its members were hungry and light-headed. Unfortunately, I'm not allowed to complain. For one thing, our congregation helped us to surpass our $2,000 fundraising goal by more than $400. For another, I just don't deserve to whine. I live in North America, where all youth are rich, spoiled and lazy. That, according to the World Vision Famine website (www.famine.ca), is the judgment pronounced on us by youth of other continents. Ouch. Sadly, though, I agree. We have no idea what hardship is.

To while away the hours of starvation, we learned how to live in an emerging economy country. We filled buckets with water and carried it down three flights of stairs. (We were going to carry it a kilometre from the lake to the church, but it rained so we stayed inside. See? We're wimps.) Then it was time to see about our food for the day. Equipped with flat stones, dishtowels and grains of corn, we set about. An hour later, six of us working constantly had produced about a cup of cornmeal mixed with rock dust, as well as several holey towels. Other empathetic exercises had varying levels of success. During our downtime we talked about the hard facts of world hunger. And I mean hard. These numbers aren't the easiest things in the world to hear.

Hunger does not have to exist. We have the available land. We have the excess food. We have the technology to grow and transport huge quantities of it. We have the money. Yes, we do. In North America, we spend $100 billion US on fast food every year. We spend $25 billion US on pet food every year. And yet, we spend only $18 billion US on foreign aid.

We don't like to think about those statistics. After all, what are we supposed to do? Stop feeding our pets? Hardly. We do, however, have to recognize that solutions are possible. There is, on this earth, enough food for every person to have at least 4.3 lbs of it each day. That amount would easily make most of us fat. Why, then, are 800 million people still suffering from malnutrition?

There aren't any easy answers here. We know that the balance between the rich and the poor has to be evened. We know that smaller farms with hands-on practices can produce four or five times more than industrial farms, but that more and more small farms are being bought out or depleted. We know these things, but we don't know how to solve them. Overwhelmed with numbers and guilt trips and images of starving children, it becomes all too easy to just block everything out. I'm guilty of it myself. Even after giving up food for a day and doing my best to experience the reality of my less fortunate brothers and sisters, I still feel inadequate. I'd love to just pretend I've done my share and forget about it, but I know I can't. In the end, I guess there's one question I have to ask myself: Can I stomach world hunger?

We know these things, but we don't know how to solve them. Overwhelmed with numbers and guilt trips and images of starving children, it becomes all too easy to just block everything out

I still think it's funny that my youth group fasted through the progressive dinner. I love the irony of it, but it's also a chilling parallel pointing to a very real situation in the world. Participating in the famine made me realize several very important things: Firstly, I am incredibly lucky to live where I do. Here, I always have the choice of finding something to eat. Secondly, I am extremely grateful for my healthy food and clean water. I am not in any danger of dying from malnutrition. Lastly, I don't think 'farmer' should be on my list of career goals. I'm really terrible at grinding corn.

Erin Woods is a regular contributor to the *Record*.

letters

A Record you can use

Thank you for your plastic wrapped baggy May edition. I enjoyed the whole issue. And the baggy worked for doggy's walk!

Rod Scott
Toronto

The evolution book list

I agree with those who would critique intelligent design as creationism made more palatable. In any guise it is not science and it is poor theology. It is quite possible to hold a position that affirms both God as creator and the scientific evidence to support evolution at the same time. In this debate I have found a book by Kenneth Miller—*Finding Darwin's God, A Scientist's Search for Common Ground Between God and Evolution*—to be most helpful and inspiring both from a theological and scientific perspective.

Rev. Linda Moffatt
Glencoe, Ont.

I strongly recommend a balanced view as presented by Gerald F. Schroeder, PhD, in his *Genesis and the Big Bang* and *The Science of God.*

Dr. Schroeder is an applied theologian with undergraduate and doctoral degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The subtitles of his books are "the discovery of harmony between modern science and the Bible" and "the convergence of scientific and biblical wisdom," respectively.

I close with this statement from *Darwin Retried* by Norman Macbeth. Broom and Simpson, two proponents of the theory of evolution came to disagree after Broom said, "It is clear to me that evolution was accomplished, not by natural selection or mutations, but by spiritual beings of various grades and various kinds of intelligence."

G. MacKintosh
Port Coquitlam, B.C.

They soldier on

Re the ministry in crisis article in April. As a former barber for 18 years, being more of a listener than a talker, my clientele included several clergy who chose to confide in me. Further, as a social worker for 25 years, I had a professional relationship with the staff of many denominations.

Most clergy were aware of how many of them guarded their own turf and did not want to step on someone else's toes. I personally witnessed one minister, seething with anger, explode when he lost a member to a rival church. Ditto, a lay leader. Another stressor was the admission to me by a prominent minister that he wished he could spend much more time dealing with spiritual matters rather than secular duties, much as described in the article as CEO responsibilities. A middle-aged priest concurred when he told me of being so happy in his new parish because the building was paid for and the administration solvent, the first time for him. Money matters play a big role in religious institutions and are as stressful and sensitive to the clergy as to an individual in financial distress.

A further major block to maintaining the church's reputation is the frequent references in the media to sexual and financial indiscretions among the clergy. It tarnishes the clergy's innocent majority and erodes the faith of the followers.

But the religious leaders soldier on and spread the good news of the Gospel.

J. Gordon Neal
Whitby, Ont.

Nobel for Lewis

As most of you know HIV/AIDS is a cause that is near and dear to Presbyterians' hearts and Stephen Lewis' efforts in this area were an inspiration to many. There is a group that is trying to secure his nomination for the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize and they have an online petition available to show support.

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Mike and Debbie Burns
via email

The metaphysic of presence

Re Barry Baldwin's essay (June).

A point of clarification. I think it's wrong to give the impression that Northrop Frye in *The Great Code* asserts Jesus couldn't read or write. Frye uses the example of Jesus writing on the ground at John 8:6. He writes, "It is already clear that what has been called the metaphysic of presence meets us at every turn in the Bible, and that the spoken word either takes precedence of the written word or lies closely behind it." To misunderstand this point of emphasis could lead to missing the point of Frye's magnificent oeuvre—that the particular transformative power of biblical language resides in the human imagination.

L. D. Mackenzie
Georgetown, Ont.

Pass it on

Re April Pop Christianity—Knock on Wood, Count Your Blessings

It was a most enjoyable read and I was laughing out loud all by myself. I can't wait to recommend it to my daughters and their husbands, as well as several at church whom I know will enjoy it—if they haven't already read it!

Evelyn Ball
Ottawa, Ont.

They offered him comfort

In September 2002, a boy of 17, lost and confused, walked through the doors of St. Andrew's, Victoria. He was a troubled young man. (Most of us remember him continually walking up to the front of the church during the service.)

We offered him comfort and guidance, gave him a Bible and with the assistance of the Victoria Police Force and the Salvation Army, three days later he was reunited with his family in Ontario.

When I temporarily relocated back to Ontario, I made an effort to seek him out, wanting to know if he was alright. I found him well and making short- and long-term plans for his life. I asked his mother to bring him to church in Orangeville so I could see him. She said that she would try but assured me it would be difficult. I insisted. She did meet me in church and told me that she had brought him and that he was sleeping in the car.

After the service I woke him up and we headed off to Tim Horton's for lunch. He is a very nice, handsome young man. I left him that day asking him to promise me that he would get his high school education. Again, I insisted.

Recently his mother got in touch with me. Both came through with their promise. The young man has written his exams and now has a high school diploma. He is employed full time and has just moved into his own apartment.

I wish to thank everyone who contributed to that day and I'm delighted to know that St. Andrew's made a difference to this fine young man.

Marilyn Bullock
Victoria, B.C.

The Presbyterian blip

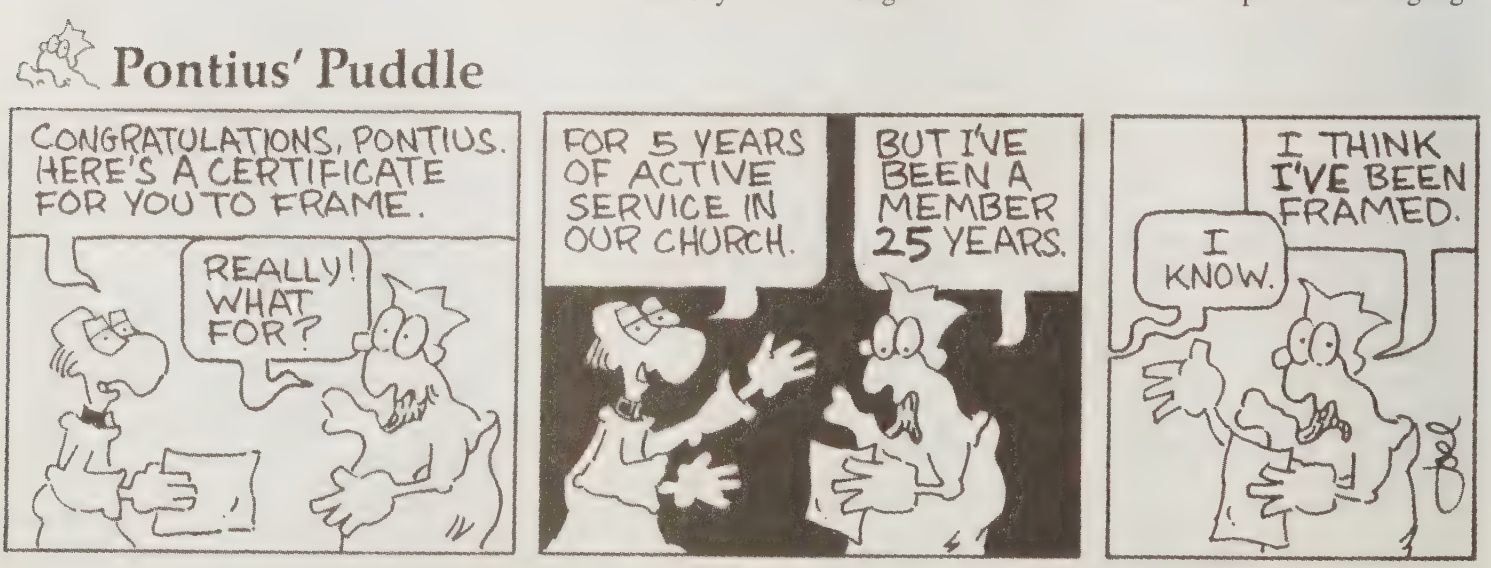
I eagerly started to read Joseph McClelland's article in June, hoping that the *Record* was at last starting to deal with this question. While the article made several good points, it seemed to be a theologian's reactionary response to the "post-modern age of technology and hedonism."

The *Record* needs more articles on this question. What is the problem and how do we solve it? What wilderness are we in and how do we move out of it?

The problem is rooted in the fact that the Christian church has been moved to the periphery of Western society after enjoying a period of 1,700 years as a human institution close to the established workings of society. Our theology, creeds and dogmas have more to do with the legalistic definition of the church as a human institution than the kingdom of God.

Is the institutional church, closely aligned to society, a form of counterfeit Christianity that has made its own wilderness? What is the Presbyterian blip on the drama of the history of the Christian Church in the world? We dump counterfeit Christianity out the door usually with a good kick to send it on its way.

Joseph McLelland does point to a solution. We need to communicate the essence of the Gospel in the language



and thought forms of today. The essence of the Gospel is the proclamation and teaching about the kingdom of God by Jesus Christ. The rock foundation is that Jesus wanted us to act as agents for the kingdom of God. The theology of the reformation is a rather Newtonian deterministic kind of understanding. If you go and ponder the words of Jesus on the kingdom of God you find a quantum. A little of the energy of that quantum was his attempt to explain that everything in the universe was contingent on God. Rather than use scripture he turned to the natural world—the kingdom of God is like a mustard seed—to help explain his ideas.

The teachers in the Presbyterian Church need to go back to look in the storeroom of the kingdom of God so that they are able to bring out new treasures as well as old.

Andrew Mitchell
North Saanich, B.C.

Joseph McLelland states "Genesis 1–11 is religious mythology …"

If we can't believe Genesis 1–11, how can we believe any of the Bible? I have been a part of a Bible study on Genesis, entitled Christ in Genesis, The God of Creation. This study started with the fact that creation did not come about by itself or by evolution. God made the whole universe out of nothing in an orderly fashion by His spoken word. Jesus was with God (Gen. 1:26 and John 1:1) as was the Spirit (Gen. 1:2). Male and female were created in His own image by God, not spoken into existence (Gen. 1: 27) and God blessed them (v. 28).

I believe God's plan of salvation was present in Genesis and that Genesis 1–11 are history.

Lynda Fitch
Wroxeter, Ont.

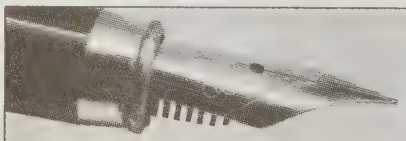
Bursting all over

I have just finished reading the June issue which I found interesting and informative. Lots of food for thought as usual. But I wonder if Owen Thornton (The Best Deal in Town) really meant that some churches are busting at the seams and not bursting at the seams.

Audrey Hill
Toronto

Correction

Something Extra is prepared by Education for Mission and PWS&D and has projects from International Ministries and Canada Ministries, as well as PWS&D. All four of these departments help to fund Something Extra. The July/August *Record* gave credit only to PWS&D; we regret this oversight. Canada Ministries and International Ministries are also engaged in mission work, as are PWS&D and Education for Mission.



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It might be 175 years old, but St. Andrew's, Belleville, Ont., still knows how to rock it out for Christ. In May the Toronto Mass Choir provided a tremendous evening of joyous singing and prayer. What a way to celebrate a birthday!



Ordination anniversaries were celebrated recently at The Kirk of St. James', Charlottetown. Those honoured have served The Presbyterian Church in Canada for a total of 156 years. Left to right are Rev. Dr. John Cameron, 50 years in ministry, Rev. Dr. James Farris, 56, Rev. Ian Glass, 40 and Rev. Geoff Ross, 10 years. Mr. Ross is currently serving as minister at The Kirk.

HAD CAKE LATELY? Share your celebrations with the rest of the church. Send your stories to PnP@presbyterianrecord.ca along with your digital photographs, 300 dpi minimum, high quality JPEGs. Or mail the photographs to: The Record, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, M3C 1J7.

To be considered for People and Places, photographs should be sharp and everyone clearly identified. The *Record* reserves the right to reject any photos not of sufficient quality. Photographs cannot be returned.



Little did Rev. John Green, of Trinity, Campbell River, B.C., know that he could be seen through the plate glass as he blessed these high school graduates. Brian Beulah, Katie Anderson, Stephanie Finlay and Patrick Fewtrell have all grown up in the church, participating in summer programs, music, youth groups and many other activities. Missing is the church's fifth grad, Leah Eamer. She too, we're sure, is blessed by Rev. John.

People and Places has seen many things in its long history; but, chocolate ministry? Why not? The Dundas 4-H Chocolate Club—it is a dairy product of sorts—meets at St. Paul's, Winchester, Ont. As a way of saying thank you for the use of the space, the chocolatiers prepared desserts for the Ladies' Aid June Potluck Supper. And then they did the dishes! (By the way, note the chocolate fountain.) People and Places would like to donate its offices to any dessert (or wine) club in the neighbourhood.

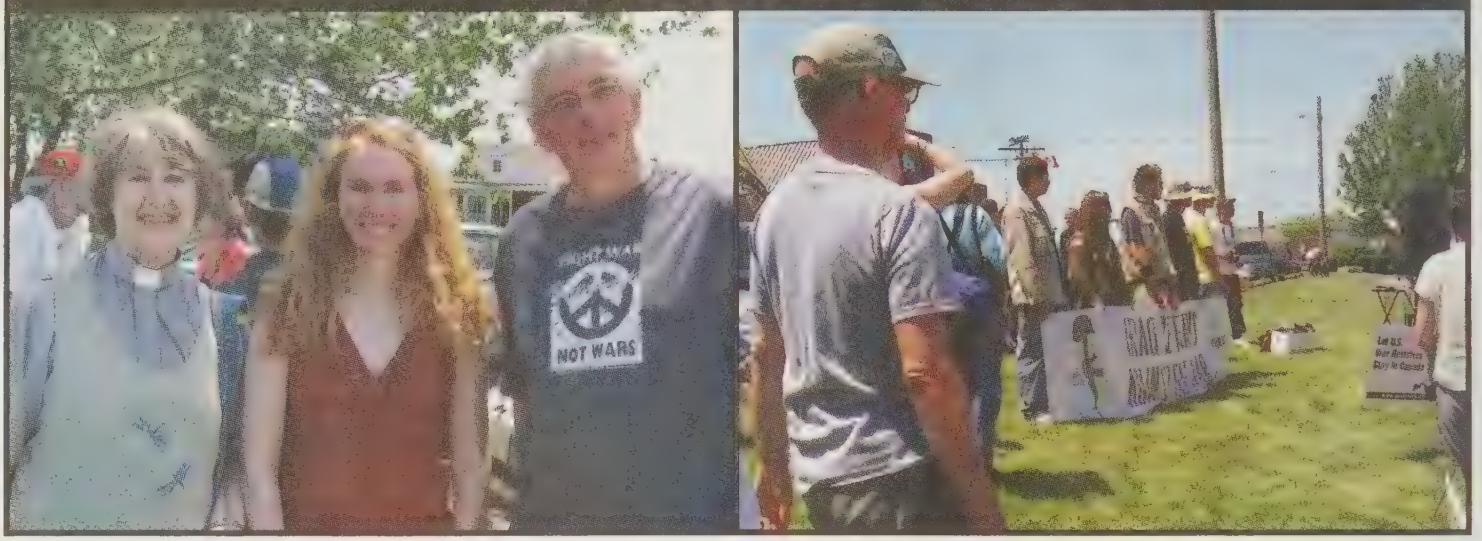




Four new elders—Harry Christie, George Murray, Merlin Alvaro and George Kyei—joined the session of First, New Westminster, B.C., in June. That's one way to give God the glory, glory.

For more People & Places submissions please visit our website: www.presbyterianrecord.ca

SPOTLIGHT



In June, Canadians and Americans met for a picnic across the Peace Bridge in Ft. Erie, Ont., to protest the war in Iraq. Presbyterian minister Marion Schaffer (left) was amongst the gathered. "I feel strongly motivated," she says, "to continue making myself available to work on justice issues; I don't think I could sleep at night if I did not." Seen with Schaffer are singer Sara Marlowe and Rev. George Addison, chaplain of Brock University. Right: soldiers who resist the Iraqi war declare themselves. However, as Schaffer points out, some soldiers were there incognito, fearing for their livelihood if found out.

Money missing from Nova Scotia church

ST. COLUMBA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH in Marion Bridge, Nova Scotia, is missing between $30,000 and $60,000. Cape Breton police were investigating its disappearance back in May, although money was first reported missing on February 21. Rev. Kevin Richardson did confirm the money is yet to be found and said he was not aware of any new information pertaining to the case. *Frank* magazine reported the congregation's lawyer, Blair Mitchell, of Mitchell & Ferguson Associates, as saying, "Members of the congregation have become aware of the possibility that funds are missing, and are taking appropriate steps to investigate that, and are looking to recover potential loss." The congregation draws about 30 people on a Sunday, in a community of about 400. – *AM*

Victoria-Royce closes its doors

After 120 years of service, Victoria-Royce, Toronto, has closed its doors. The final service was held on June 25th, with about 300 people in attendance. "There was a tremendous response," said Rev. George French, a former minister of Victoria-Royce for 15 years. "They came from far and wide to say goodbye."

When French first took up his call at ViceRoy, as it was affectionately called, he was told by a fellow minister that the church would likely close in two years. "But its impact on the community was real," said French, noting the food bank that served the neighbourhood and the Korean congregation that began worshipping there. "It will be remembered for its social services."

Victoria-Royce began in 1885 in the waiting room of the Toronto junction railway station of the Canadian Pacific Railway. About 50 people gathered regularly, when it was known as West Toronto Junction Presbyterian Church. The church lost about half of its members during Union in 1925 and it amalgamated with Royce Church in 1969.

The congregation served an increasingly multicultural neighbourhood, as well as people of all ages. In recent years, the church offered a homework club, a mom and baby café, games and movie nights, first aid and CPR workshops, special concerts and an open stage night where people from the community were invited to perform music, poetry and dance.

French said although nothing has been confirmed, he has heard speculation that a Korean congregation might buy the building and continue ministry there, or it may be converted into seniors' housing—something more and more Toronto churches are doing, and an idea that was proposed to ViceRoy many years ago.

"I feel badly to see it closing," said French, "but I was impressed by the final service that was held. The community and presbytery came out and said farewell." – *AM*

Training programs rejected

Materials don't reflect Reformed theology, says committee

The Christian Education Advisory Committee regularly reviews educational material for use in the Presbyterian Church, based on whether or not the material is considered to be Presbyterian. Recently, the committee found several materials to be unacceptable, with the great distinction being whether or not it reflects a Reformed theology or an evangelical/dispensationalist view.

Dorothy Henderson, associate secretary for Christian Education, said there is no problem in using some evangelical materials, but cautioned their exclusive use. "It's like ice cream," she said. "If someone asked you, 'What is the right kind of ice cream?' there would be no correct answer. It is a matter of preference. It is possible for me to be a chocolate (Presbyterian) person and use a dab of vanilla (Roman Catholic or Orthodox or evangelical/dispensationalist), but when we start to use whole bunches of another flavour, we lose what we're about."

A program from Focus on the Family, a conservative church organization, was recently rejected. "While colourful and connected to life, the materials express views that are black and white or more narrow than how most Presbyterians would think," states the committee's review. Pentecostal materials generally don't have the same understanding of infant baptism as reformed traditions, and are often turned down. Materials from Pioneer Clubs, an evangelizing ministry, and *Gather Round*, by the Brethren Press, were also deemed unacceptable.

The committee meets twice a year, and uses several criteria in determining whether or not materials are acceptable. An emphasis on community, social justice and living in gratitude, the idea of God as grace as opposed to judge, and an awareness of God being sovereign are important criteria to be met. The committee also watches for characteristics of children and how they're presented. A curriculum from the Christian Reformed Church, for example, noted at the beginning of its package that children are sinful. "That may be theologically correct," said Henderson, "but I don't want teachers to see that first."

While colourful and connected to life, the materials express views that are black and white or more narrow than how most Presbyterians would think'

The committee's work is guided by ideas adapted from *Children's Ministry: Nurturing Faith Within the Family of God* by Lawrence Richards. "Does the curriculum support, encourage and facilitate learning within a growing faith community? … If it does not foster a sense of Christian community, wherein a child may safely explore and test his or her faith, it will only teach facts, not nurture faith."

Clues to look for include:

- children are encouraged to interact with each other
- teachers are given direction for using open-ended activities, rather than controlled activities seeking only right and wrong answers
- teachers and children are encouraged to share experiences from their own lives
- teachers are encouraged to be faith models and participants in the learning process rather than the ones who "know it all"

Other criteria include educational value, price, producer, inclusive content and language (regarding gender, race and culture), availability, and the use of all intelligences, including reading, writing, talking, movement, arts, music and logic.

Despite differences in theologies, Henderson stressed her ice cream idea. "Who's to say who is right and who is wrong? No single flavour is right or wrong. They're just different." *–AM*

New staff and new programs at LMA

THE OFFICE OF THE Life and Mission Agency is undergoing some restructuring thanks to new programs, a new focus on communications and the increased workload at Presbyterian World Service & Development resulting from the tsunami appeal, Hurricane Katrina and the Pakistan earthquake. To accommodate three new staff persons, the national offices are being revamped and reconfigured.

"The great support that Canadian Presbyterians have given to PWS&D has also enabled us to receive increased support from federal and provincial governments and to work cooperatively with other churches and agencies," said Rev. Rick Fee, general secretary of the LMA. "We have embarked on significant projects that require staff to ensure accountability and transparency and the ability to communicate back to church members."



Alexander MacDonald

Changes are as follows:

- Ken Kim began his work as the new director of PWS&D on Aug. 1st.
- Alexander Macdonald has been hired as a program assistant in communications for PWS&D.
- John Popiel first arrived to cover Bella Lam's maternity leave. He will now coordinate programs in the Americas and Eastern Europe for PWS&D.
- A Healing and Reconciliation Animator (see May 2006 *Record*) was yet to be hired at press time, but the name was to be announced by early August. He/she will be working with congregations, national staff, local church groups, ecumenical partners and aboriginal organizations to further the aims of the healing and reconciliation initiative.

"Christianity is about communication. God's word started it all. The great commission was that people were to go forth in word and in action. We have a great message to get out there," Fee said. "Over the next while, the LMA will be working with all departments to know how best we might ensure this communication is done effectively. It involves a great deal of cooperation and sharing ideas." *– AM*



A farmer stands in front of her maize field in Northern Malawi. The maize is lush and healthy thanks to the legumes she planted in this field the year before.

RACHEL BEZNER KERR, PWS&D

More than just peanuts

PWS&D's partner, Ekwendeni Hospital, is helping farmers in Northern Malawi learn how they can use peanuts, pigeon peas, and soybeans to ensure that they have enough to eat. The legumes help improve the fertility of the soil and provide essential proteins for the diet. Small-scale farmers are discovering that by rotating the legumes with their corn (the staple food in the Malawi diet) – they will harvest more corn, and have more to eat and sell. As part of the program, they are also learning fun and healthy recipes to prepare the legumes – so they, and their children, have more and better food to eat. These nuts are more than just something good to eat – they are hope for tomorrow.

Share hope. Support PWS&D.

PWS&D's relief and development programs operate because people and congregations financially support the work. PWS&D receives no funds from Presbyterians Sharing...

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AIDS awareness needed

THE CANADIAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES passed its Invitation Regarding HIV/AIDS in May, asking member churches to:

- shun all prejudice toward people with HIV
- root out social stigma and discrimination against all people living with HIV/AIDS
- support all who dedicate themselves to caring for people living with HIV and AIDS
- promote all kinds of appropriate behaviours that prevent the spread of the virus
- work to make lifesaving medicines accessible to all who need them
- work to cancel the debt of countries with high prevalence of HIV rates (recognizing that poor economic circumstances are a powerful determinant in the quality of life of an HIV patient)

"The PCC was very happy to endorse this statement," said Rev. Stephen Kendall, the Presbyterian Church's principal clerk and member of the CCC's board. "It shows many diverse churches speaking with one voice about HIV/AIDS and the need for compassion toward all those who are affected."

A major international conference on HIV/AIDS was held in Toronto in August, and the Presbyterian Church was involved. A report will follow in a later issue of the *Record*.

Peace in the Sudan, please

AN INTERFAITH COALITION has asked Prime Minister Stephen Harper to continue applying diplomatic pressure on the Sudanese government to ease the tension in Darfur. Moderator Wilma Welsh joined the heads of major churches and faith groups in Canada to request the Canadian government "work with others in engaging all diplomatic means available to address the legitimate concerns of groups which either do not yet form part of the Darfur Peace Agreement or that have a direct stake in a resolution of the conflict including rebel groups, civil society organizations, and victims."

The letter noted that the government in Khartoum has a long history of signing agreements and then reneging on its obligations. "Both parties to the Peace Agreement

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Christ is the hottest show around

Investing in Christian broadcasting is simply good business sense

BY AMY MACLACHLAN

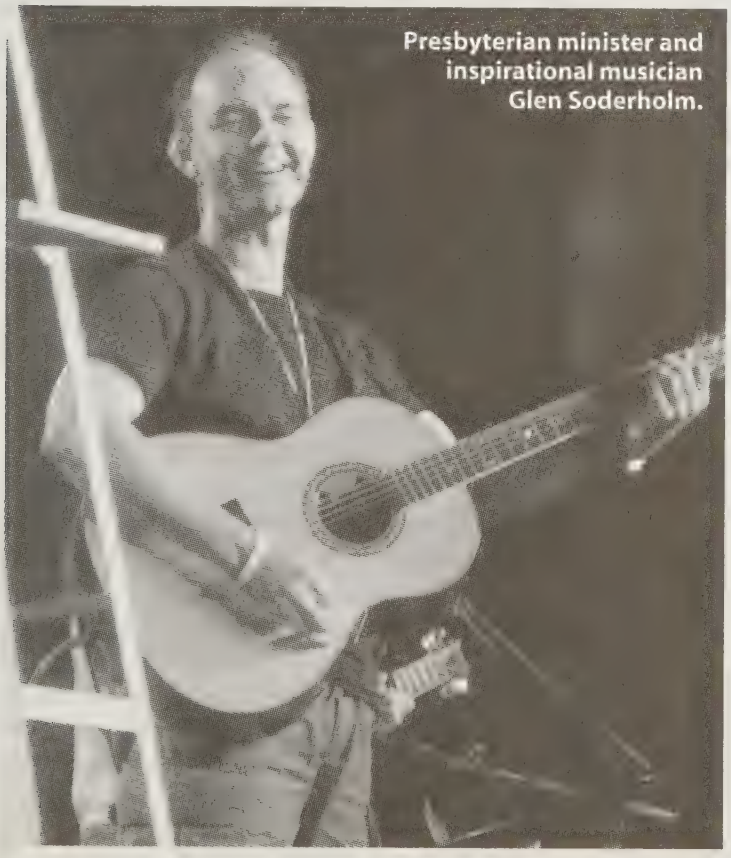
Since Jan. 2004, Gigmasters.com, an American entertainment booking website, recorded a near-200 per cent increase in the number of people booking Christian rock and other religious-based entertainment for everything from weddings, to corporate parties, to religious festivals. The site receives a monthly average of more than 400 requests for Christian rock entertainment alone.

"The trend of hiring Christian-themed acts for all types of special events is absolutely exploding nationwide," said Gigmasters president Kevin Kinyon in a press release. "It's not just for revival meetings in the Bible Belt; Christian acts are getting booked to do weddings in New York and Los Angeles, gospel singers are being recruited for corporate events. And every day we're seeing the searches for new talent increase."

Kinyon noted that Christian music is also getting more radio air time. "Sirius and XM Satellite Radio have recently added Christian rock stations. Not only are Christian bands getting more mainstream play, but Christian stations are claiming strong market shares."

XM Satellite Radio, which offers commercial-free music 24 hours a day, currently features two Christian stations out of its 61 music channels—a Christian pop music station and another for gospel music.

Christian music isn't the only type of media growing in popularity. Canadian Crossroads Television Systems (CTS) has seen increases in viewers. According to Rob Sheppard, program manager, CTS has seen a viewer increase of 10 to 15 per cent over the last few years, reaching about 1.5 million viewers each week. CTS has also increased its reach since it signed on in the Toronto/Hamilton area in 1998. In April 2004, the CRTC granted CTS licenses to rebroadcast its signal in Ottawa and London, meaning about 85 per cent of Ontario now receives the station, which is available across the country via satellite.



Presbyterian minister and inspirational musician Glen Soderholm.

Presbyterians have their own TV personality in Larry Brice, who hosts CTS' *Reachout for Life*, offering a practical presentation of Jesus Christ through commentary and interviews with contemporary Christian leaders. The show fits into the station's slogan Television You Can Believe In. The broadcaster requires that its shows, particularly sitcoms and fictional dramas, should present situations where a moral decision is made that reflect the beliefs of a Christian audience.

Many of the sitcoms that air on CTS were mainstream in the '80s and early '90s. Shows like *Growing Pains, Charles in Charge* and *Full House* are considered wholesome enough for the network to air. The popularity of these "Christian" shows, including newer offerings such as *Touched by an Angel* and *Seventh Heaven*, is an indication that some viewers want more conservative moral values in their shows rather than risqué entertainment where violence, sex and foul language are common.

"Today there is much more choice in television and the current trend to draw viewers seems to be through profanity, sexuality and violence," said Sheppard. "When programming is produced that fits our mandate, we will make every effort to acquire it for our audience regardless of the year or era it was produced. The reality is that most of this type of programming was produced in years gone by."

"Maybe it's a reaction on the part of people who are looking for something else in pop culture," said Lois Sweet, a professor at Carleton University's School of Journalism and former faith and ethics reporter for the *Toronto Star*. "There's a lot of violence, and misogynist and racist stuff out there, and values expressed that some people might not appreciate. People still want to have a good time and enjoy themselves, but still be morally in line."

Sweet said the growth in popularity of Christian media may stem from an increased yearning for diversity. "We're an extremely diverse society, and that's reflected in these outlets, be it music, movies or books. It brings new perspectives on the issues and to get those out into the marketplace is very positive. Christian media is part of that communication and I'm just thrilled to see that it's out there."

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continue to violate the ceasefire while the security provisions in the agreement offer no credible guarantees or guarantors, placing much of the responsibility for security with the African Union's mission in Sudan, a task for which it has insufficient resources." The interfaith group asked the Canadian government to "be a fair share contributor to the necessary financial, material, human and logistical resources to fully support a guarantee of security in the region through a United Nations peacekeeping presence to enhance the African Union's efforts."

While asking Harper to continue diplomatic pressure to assure the agreement's terms are held by all the signatories, the interfaith group also urged that Canada "immediately increase contributions to humanitarian relief efforts such as those of the United Nations' World Food Programme beyond the recently announced commitments."

Gun control needs vision

MODERATOR WILMA WELSH, on request of the General Assembly, has written to Peter Mackay, the minister of foreign affairs, to "adopt global transfer principles or criteria that would prevent the shipment of small arms to countries where there are serious human rights violations or to countries in which small arms are likely to undermine human security and development efforts."

More than 500,000 people are killed globally each year and many more thousands maimed by small arms. "The Presbyterian Church in Canada witnesses the destructive impact of small arms in many of the countries where the church supports mission staff and relief and development programs," wrote Welsh.

She asked the government to provide "strong leadership" at the United Nations Small Arms Review Conference to review the progress being made by governments in implementing the program to control the proliferation and misuse of small arms.

She acknowledged to Mackay that she was presenting "an ambitious agenda" which would require "a bold vision" and offered the "continuing prayers" of the church.

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"It's a sign of strength that diverse experiences are being aired and that people grapple with them. You need to be questioned to know what you believe."

Listen Up TV, a weekly Canadian news and current affairs program from a Christian perspective, began in 2004, airing only on CTS and NOWTV. Since moving to Global TV with host Lorna Dueck, a regular columnist on faith and public life for *The Globe & Mail*, the show reaches more than 2.9 million viewers each week.



Natasha Oleksiuk, the host of "Most Requested Music You Can Believe In."

Sixty per cent of Canadians say religion is an important part of their lives, and 65 per cent of those who attend religious services weekly feel "the media does a poor job of covering faith and religion and that this area does not get the kind of media coverage it should," according to a 2003 Angus Reid study for the Centre of Faith and the Media.

SAT-7 is a satellite TV station for Christians in the Middle East and Northern Africa. Established in 1996, SAT-7 has almost 7 million viewers. Since satellite television is the only source of uncensored information and entertainment in much of the Arab world, SAT-7 hopes it can have powerful effects on issues of freedom, women's empowerment, illiteracy and poverty. And the station has begun work to bring the signal into Canadian homes, targeting Arabic, Farsi and Turkish-speaking communities. An office has been established in Richmond Hill, Ont.

A joint project between the International Bible Society, Faith Comes By Hearing and Trans World Radio ended a one-year radio broadcast into China in March 2005. It is estimated that the Radio Bible Project, which aired 15-minute programs of dramatized Scripture readings, complete with interpretation notes, biblical background and life application, reached more than 10 million people in one year. The initiative, which is expected to continue in other countries over the next five years, intends to reach the 50 per cent of the world who cannot read, and to give them Bible translations in their native languages.

Trans World Radio also teamed up with Kerus Global Education to produce character-based radio programming intended to help African youth make responsible life choices. The project was motivated by the alarming rate of the spread of HIV on that continent, with 14,000 Africans becoming infected each day. The initiative is part of a plan to increase HIV/AIDS radio broadcasts over the next six years. The current programs are based on a curriculum developed by Kerus, which has conducted HIV/AIDS training in 41 countries, and will begin in Uganda, Mozambique, Kenya and Ethiopia, targeting teens, parents and pastors.

Although the market for Christian entertainment seems to be opening up, Sheppard said the most likely challenge facing Christian TV and media in the coming years is distribution. "Cable companies and satellite providers may not be too quick to add religious programming to their distribution system unless they are certain there is a demand."

Some stations are taking the leap. Roger's Broadcasting bought Vancouver-based NOWTV in 2005 and subsequently launched a religious channel in Winnipeg and a digital channel called The Christian Channel. Rogers has dedicated $1.3 million to support the production and distribution of Canadian religious television programming. In a June 2005 article by Frank Stirk in *ChristianWeek*, Leslie Sole, CEO of television at Roger's Broadcasting, said purchasing a "spiritual station" at this time is "simply good business sense."



Moderators of General Assembly met for a social gathering at church offices a few weeks before assembly this year. Seated from left: Jean Morris (2005), Wilma Welsh (2006), Earle Roberts (1993), John Congram (1997). Standing, from left: Art Van Seters (1999), Ken McMillan (1979), Harrold Morris (1989), Bill Klempa (1998), Rick Fee (2004) and Linda Bell (1992).

U.S. Presbyterians approve gay ordination and marijuana

Malawi church threatens to cut ties asserting it demeans "faith and doctrine"

The Presbyterian Church (USA) made some controversial decisions at its General Assembly in June, and is beginning to hear criticism from conservative members and partners. Meeting in Birmingham, Alabama, the assembly voted to allow flexibility in deciding whether to ordain non-celibate homosexuals as clergy, something that was previously banned outright by the denomination.

"We have not altered the fundamentals; we have the same standards as before," said Rev. Clifton Kirkpatrick, stated clerk. "The report encourages a more pastoral approach to ordination and encourages our governing bodies to do a thorough work of examining people for office."

The proposal was one of seven contained in a theological task force report that has spent four years looking for ways to help the denomination stay together despite its differences.

PC(USA)'s Book of Order states that clergy must adhere to "fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman or chastity in singleness." But the new policy approved by 298 votes (with 221 against) gives presbyteries and congregations greater leeway in ordaining clergy as well as lay deacons or elders, provided they are faithful to the church's core values.

Rev. David Miller of Tampa Bay presbytery called the measure "a wrong turn," the Presbyterian News Service reported. He said it was "a license to overlook clear standards that have been set, a license to ignore the larger discernment of the body of Christ and a license to legislate by interpretation."

Leaders of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian in Malawi say the denomination may consider cutting ties with its U.S. counterpart because of this decision.

The moderator of the Malawi church's northern Livingstonia Synod, Rev. Maurice Munthali, told local media that his denomination is praying that a new resolution by the U.S. church does not impact Malawi.

"That practice is not ordained by God," said Munthali. "But as Presbyterians, it affects us because the Presbyterian Church is one big global family." He asserted that the ordination of homosexual clergy demeaned the faith and doctrine of the Presbyterian tradition.

The moderator of the Blantyre Synod, Rev. Lackson Chingadza, agreed with Munthali.

"The fact that we are Presbyterian does not guarantee that we agree with them. We cannot be one when we don't believe in the same things," he said. "Eventually, we may have to part ways because of this."

PC(USA)'s General Assembly took another risk when it become the seventh major religious organization in the United States to support the use of medical marijuana. "Medical marijuana is an issue of mercy," said Rev. Lynn Bledsoe, a Presbyterian minister from Alabama who works as a hospice chaplain. Her words were issued in a statement from the Interfaith Drug Policy Initiative, a group seeking to promote "less coercive" alternatives to the war on drugs.

The consensus vote came as U.S. lawmakers were to consider a bill prohibiting the federal government from using any funds for legal action against medical marijuana users who comply with their state laws and have a doctor's order. Eleven states allow medical use of marijuana following a doctor's prescription, but federal law enforcement officials can arrest people in those states.

"As people of faith, we are called to stand up for humans who are suffering needlessly," said Bledsoe. "It is unconscionable that seriously ill patients can be arrested for making an earnest attempt at healing by using medical marijuana with their doctors' approval." – *with files from ENI*

Biking for Bibles

To celebrate its 100th year, the Canadian Bible Society tours the country

BY BRUCE KEMP

As part of the centennial celebrations of the Canadian Bible Society, I led a team of more than 80 cyclists for nine weeks on a cross-Canada journey. It took us 64 days to cover more than 7,500 kilometres. The team gathered at Mile Zero in Victoria on July 2nd and ended with a climb up Signal Hill in Saint John's on September 3rd. The ride passed through every province in Canada. We had participants from all parts of Canada and even some from Australia and Ireland.

The project we chose for this ride is one that I have actively encouraged for years: to provide Bibles to those who work in prisons, the inner city, youth work and in first nations' ministries. One of the challenges is being able to afford to purchase scripture for the people they serve. Our aim is not only to provide scripture to these ministries, but also to work with them to include guides to the scripture in a package and format that will allow these workers to make a greater impact. Our goal for this project is $500,000.

While the Canadian Bible Society has been actively working in Canada for more than 200 years, it was only in 1906 that by an act of Parliament former branches and auxiliaries of the British and Foreign Bible Society were brought together to form a Canadian society.

Today we provide the Word of God in more than 70 languages locally including more than 20 First Nations languages and more then 2,400 translations worldwide.

I have worked with the Bible Society for 10 years and am pleased to be part of a team that works with other ministries to change hearts and lives. – *Bruce Kemp is a Presbyterian minister.*



Bruce Kemp, Centennial Ride Coordinator and North Alberta District Director, participates in Bike for Bibles.

A journey of faith

BY BERND KOHLER

Personally, while I like to commute on my bicycle, I don't think that I would have entered the Bike for Bibles Centennial Ride if I hadn't felt a strong nudge from God to do so. Since God does things for me all the time, I felt good about tangibly doing something for Him. In a way, for me, doing this ride parallels the story of the talents. God has given me the ability to ride my bike and called me to use it for his purpose of spreading the Word by helping the Canadian Bible Society raise funds. I felt a bit like the reluctant prophet Jonah, being anxious about undertaking the tasks of fundraising and going on such a long ride. But, I figured I might as well follow the call instead of being swallowed by a whale, and so I remind myself whenever I get overwhelmed, that I'm doing this for God and that God only asks those who are worthy. I am excited because this is the first time I am doing something that I don't really want to do for myself but feel called upon to do for God. Actually, it scares me sometimes, because I don't want to fail God in this effort. I guess you could say it has become a bit of a faith journey now.

I have learned a lot about getting out of my comfort zone doing fundraising, and thank God for this interesting and educational opportunity and experience. – *Bernd Kohler attends Dayspring, Edmonton. One of his choir "sisters" introduced him to the Bible Society.*

For more information: www.bikeforbibles.ca.

Red River history on web

A NEW WEB EXHIBIT from the Association for Manitoba Archives highlights the Red River Settlement Churches from 1818-1870. The churches were central to the lives of settlers in the remote fur trading community on the banks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers. Archival documents left by the congregations reveal what life was like in the now-vanished society.

Interactive maps show the settlement as it was in 1825, 1855 and 1870. Letters and diaries of missionaries and parishioners are available to be read. Viewers learn how stone and frame church buildings were built out of local materials. Background information gives the historical context to documents and the exhibit is illustrated with photographs, drawings and paintings. Colourful characters come alive through their letters and diaries.

The exhibit, entitled Recorders of Community, was created in honour of Manitoba Day which was on May 12. To view the site, visit www.mbarchives.mb.ca and click the church door in the "What's New" box.

PHOTO: CANADIAN BIBLE SOCIETY

'School of Peace'

ENI–Religious leaders in Asia are hoping a "School of Peace" will help young activists from different religions spread a message of harmony and tolerance.

"This program has opened my eyes. Earlier, I thought my religion was the best," said Elizarni Jaffar, a Muslim from Indonesia's Aceh province, at the end of the three month program. "Now I realize that faith is precious to each one. If we need peace, we have to respect one another," added Jaffar, who works with an action group in Aceh called Beujroh (Be Better). He was one of 16 Muslim, Christian, Hindu and Buddhist youth from conflict zones throughout Asia who took part in the program, in India, that lasted from February to May.

Top Anglican a woman

ENI–The US Episcopal (Anglican) Church has elected Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori as its first female leader, a move seen as creating further strain in a denomination already divided over the consecration of an openly gay bishop.

She is the first woman to hold the top post in any of the world's Anglican churches. Only two other Anglican churches, in Canada and New Zealand, have ordained women bishops, although another 11 of the Anglican Communion's 38 provinces have accepted the principle. The election came 30 years after the 2.3-million-member Epi copal Church approved the ordination of women to the priesthood.

Moltmann scooooooores

ENI–German Protestant Juergen Moltmann was declared the greatest theologian of the 20th century in the Systematic Theology World Cup that took place on the Internet during the world's top soccer tournament in Germany.

Thirty-two theologians were put down for the qualifying groups when the theology tournament opened in June, with 16 of them going through to final heats. The online tournament followed the soccer schedule. The final pitted Moltmann against Swiss Roman Catholic Hans Urs von Balthasar.

It's called 'theism'

The Bible can be read in the spirit of the traditional Japanese tea ceremony, says a pastor who teaches the ritual renowned for its tranquility and attention to detail that has been influenced by Zen Buddhism.

"The spirit of Christianity dwells deeply within the spirit of the tea ceremony which is often described as the essence of Japanese culture," says Rev. Toshio Takahashi, who lectures on both the Japanese tea ceremony and on Christianity.

The tea ceremony known in Japanese as Omotesenke has been described as "a communication of the minds of host and guests through the enjoyment of delicious tea together."

Faiths condemn terrorism

ENI–The World Summit of Religious Leaders, the largest interfaith gathering to meet in Russia since the time of the Cold War, closed its July meeting by passing a resolution condemning terrorism, economic inequality, environmental abuses and the denigration of moral values in the modern world.

"We condemn terrorism and extremism in any form, as well as attempts to justify them by religion," read the statement, passed without a formal vote, but with no one objection to the text. "We deplore the activities of pseudo-religious groups destroying freedom and health of people as well as the ethical climate in societies."

The statement was addressed to the leaders of the Group of Eight countries, who met in St. Petersburg later in July. Russia holds the G8 presidency this year and in his address to the religion summit's participants, Russian President Vladimir Putin promised to bring the final document to the attention of the leaders of the world's leading industrial nations. "Too often, the impact of religious extremism on human affairs has hit the headlines in a very negative way," said Archdeacon Colin Williams of the Conference of European Churches. "Rather, more attention needs to be given to the assiduous way in which churches and other faith groups have worked to promote within national, regional and international decision making the values of justice and freedom and equality."

BACK ISSUES

To inquire into the availability of a back issue of the *Presbyterian Record*, please contact our circulation department at circulation@presbyterianrecord.ca.



The future is now

Unheeded advice to those who don't need it (with an addendum for those who do)

BY ANDREW FAIZ



Debbie Travis is a television host of design and renovation shows, which she produces through her own company. She got herself in a frenzy earlier this year when she realized that youth today just 'aint got no gumption. So, she decided to teach them a lesson: "This new show has the backdrop of a renovation but is focused on these 20-somethings, the 'entitled' generation who have it all ... except a future."

Debbie has obviously never met Kirsten Femson.

Kirsten spent three years putting together a book called *The Way They Should Go: Timeless Advice for the Teen Journey*. It started as a Grade 8 project; she sent letters to 250 people "asking them to share words of wisdom and inspiration for her teenage friends." The contributors include her parents, her younger sister, her friends, her teachers and such luminaries as Janet Ecker, Philip Yancey and the former American surgeon general C. Everett Koop. That takes gumption.

There is wisdom here amongst the pap (Dream Big! Dream Often!) but the book itself is a greater testimony than any one contribution. This young woman did it! She dreamed big and she dreamed often—there was once a thought in her head which one can now hold in one's hands. That's remarkable.

And it negates Travis' observation that the younger generation just doesn't have it. Each generation is smarmy about its contributions and churlish about the young. (Baby Boomers have turned smarmy into an art form.) Each generation feels a need to give advice to the young—often advice they didn't heed when they were young—without bothering to check the facts.

Check out the hundreds at Canada Youth—we have seen the future and it is now. Most of these youth are not participating in a one-off: they've been active in mission work for a good portion of their young lives. And, most remarkable of all, this amazing energy is from within a smarmy denomination.

I am in awe of this generation; and, yet, I await Kirsten's letter for my opportunity to give advice to those lucky enough to be younger than me.

So here it is: Be Christ-like: you have till age 30 to figure out your calling. Take your time; think it through. There is a purpose for you under heaven. You might have to serve God as a chartered accountant or a hairdresser or a rodeo clown or stay-at-home dad. It doesn't matter; what's important is that you seek out your calling. And, if you don't make it by 30, then, well, figure it out by 40 or 50 or 60. God has patience.

Once you have your calling then focus on it. Do it well. Don't let the noise of the world get in your way. Christ was focused on his calling; he didn't let tradition, habit or prevailing ideologies get in his way. Christ paid the price for his calling—the ultimate sacrifice. But, along the way he paid in many smaller ways: he walked around for three years with a dozen sincere but essentially dense men. He had to turn his back on his family. Local authorities rebuked him, he never made a living wage and he slept in some rough dives and hung out with some unsavoury characters. Tough stuff, but you gotta do what you're called to do.

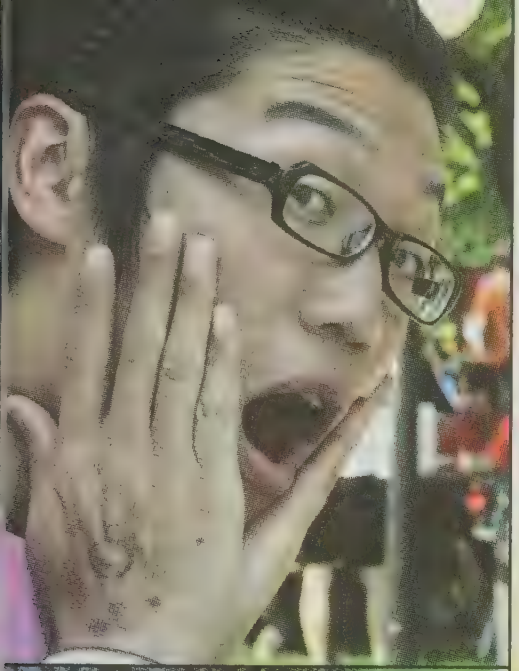
Of course, you'll never have to put up that kind of penance—his ultimate sacrifice clears you of equal suffering. But, be focused on being Christ-like. Eschew authority, particularly of those who claim to be religious. Think for yourself. Pray often. Laugh and sing every minute, every day. Christ turned water into wine; you can at least turn lemons into lemonade.

But, here's a warning: there will come a time, very soon, sooner than you realize, when you will become a mortgage-slave. And, you will become smarmy about your youth and hate the new music and be horrified by pop-culture. That's how you'll know you've lost your way.

So, in the meantime, give this page to somebody older than you: they need this advice more than you do, right now.

Andrew Faiz is a writer, producer and filmmaker. He is also managing editor of the Record. You can reach him at mngeditor@presbyterianrecord.ca.

ILLUSTRATION: ©ISTOCKPHOTO.COM/VALERIE CHABOT









CYO6

Youth inspired to 'hit the road' at church's largest gathering

Talk about a lesson in contrasts. In early July, more than 600 youth, young adults and youth leaders descended on Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont., ready for some singing, playing, dancing and worshipping (amidst flashing lights, electric guitars and giant projection screens), and yes, for some learning too. Exactly one month prior, Brock was home to the 132nd General Assembly, where playing and dancing were farther from the ho-hum agenda than thoughts of snow to a cottager lounging by the lake.

For five days, bonds were formed, friendships were forged and age barriers were overstepped. Daily activities not only included tie-dying and fabric painting, volleyball and tug of war, in-depth workshops, intimate small groups and local mission work; young Presbyterians learned there were others going through the same issues, struggles and joys they were, and left the event ready to "hit the road" (the event's official theme) excited, empowered and willing to tackle the challenges facing the church, the world and themselves.

Welcome to Canada Youth 2006.

PHOTOS BY AMY MACLACHLAN AND ROB ELLIS



Future elders participate in an exercise that encourages common goal setting and team building.

MAKING THEIR MARK TODAY

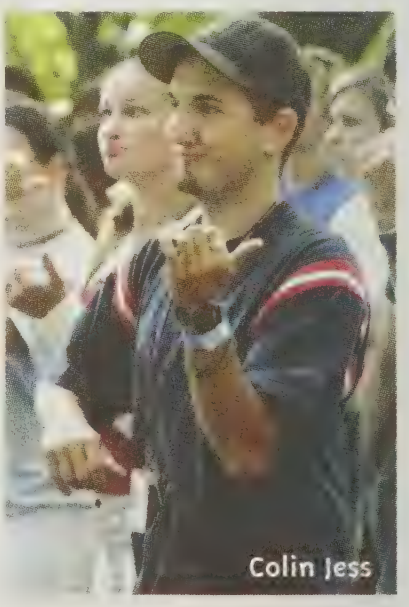
BY COLIN JESS

"Youth are the future of the church!" How many times have we as youth leaders heard this statement? During the first week of July, I had the opportunity to attend Canada Youth 2006 as a youth ministry training track participant. If there was one message that played over and over in my mind, it was that "youth are the future of the church." But what we kept discussing at CY was not so much the future of our youth, but how those youth can have an impact now. Watching the young people over the week allowed me to see how well they interacted in a Christian community with their peers, with adults and with God.

The youth at CY were from all over Canada but in a matter of hours, they came together to form a tight-knit community. From the moment I arrived I felt accepted. Everyone left their image at the door. For that week, we were nothing but Christians. Even as somewhat of an outsider because I was in a separate learning track, these youth thought nothing of spending time getting to know me and talking with me. During my initial moments there, I was not sure what to expect, but I was amazed by the openness and comfort these youth were showing me. All they required in return was that I show the same interest in them as they had taken in me. If congregations simply make the effort of showing interest in these youth, we would see just how much of a spark they have for God. It is easy to be caught in the trap of thinking you cannot relate to today's youth due to age disparities. Take the time to talk and listen and you will see they are not so different from other generations. They are looking to adults for support, friendship and acceptance.

They also showed me in many ways what it means to be a true Christian. So often we are caught up in the standard prayers, church services and worship that we lose the excitement that originally sent us off on a quest to have a true and strong relationship with God. By watching these young adults actively worship and just sing with all they had to the glory of God, I was reminded of what Christianity is all about. If we all put more of our hearts into our walk with God instead of just going through the paces, it would inject new life into the church. To experience the enthusiasm of the praise band made up of young people, and seeing the outstretched arms of hundreds of teenagers reaching in the air as if toward God during worship, is what makes me think not only are these youth a strong force for the future, but many of them are making their mark right now.

I learned so much about how youth interact with adults. They worked hand in hand with adults whether in their small groups, or with the ministerial staff who organized worship services. The youth at this event showed a passion and drive for God unlike any I have ever seen. It made me see that even though I may not be a teenager anymore, I am still able to relate to them. They want the same things that we as adults want; they seek to be understood, accepted, cared for and appreciated. If congregations take the time to speak openly with their youth and to listen to them, it will only strengthen our church community. Our youth can amaze us with what they have to contribute to the church and can help us forge a renewed connection with God. Open your doors and minds to youth so that they can bring glory to God, not only in the future, but now.



Colin Jess

– Colin Jess is a youth leader at St. Andrew's, Brampton, Ont.

LIKE JESUS IN THE TEMPLE

Youth have smarts which should be encouraged, not directed

After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. Luke 2



Keeping the eye on the ball; and the head in the game.

BY BLAIR BERTRAND

It shouldn't surprise us that the teachers Jesus sat with were older men, since in our own context we are used to older folks hanging around the church. Like our older people, these older men normally handed on the interpretative tradition that was given to them. They told youngsters what it really meant to be Jewish, to read the law and the prophets with understanding. They told young people like Jesus how it was done in the past so that they could faithfully do it in the future. Something happened in this instance however, something that shook things up a bit. The young person taught back. Instead of receiving the tradition of how to understand scripture, Jesus gave a new understanding of how to read scripture. This is a reoccurring theme in Luke (see the Emmaus road story which was included at CY06); Jesus teaching others how to understand scripture, but the first time he did it he was a young person.

The church, through the Planning Team of CY06, asked Colleen Wood and myself to be those "old men" for CY06. We co-wrote the curriculum that guided the small groups of youth who met daily, in essence sitting down through the small group leaders with each youth and interpreting scripture on a daily basis. As we approached our task, we wanted to give teens the tools to interpret scripture faithfully and innovatively. That is, we wanted teens to stand in the tradition of our church but also allow them to put forward new and potentially prophetic readings. For me, three important principles guided my writing.

It's about the Bible

Too often, we provide youth with principles rather than giving them the tools they need to read the Bible for all it's worth. Commonly, adults will read the text, discern some underlying principles, design some engaging activities that point to the principle and then have a discussion with youth about how to apply those principles to our everyday lives. There is nothing inherently wrong with this process but it does not really engage youth in reading the Bible; it engages them in the principles underlying the story that adults see. For example, the story of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10 could be summarized as being about loving others even when it is difficult. Love is the principle and then we move quickly to application of how we might love others, say in our high schools.

If Jesus had wanted us to know the principle, wouldn't it have been more effective to simply state it rather than telling stories? There are truths that we encounter when we read a story that cannot get expressed as principles. The CY curriculum attempted to allow youth to experience the truth of the text rather than the principles that adults summarized from their reading. For instance, instead of giving small proof texts that illustrate the underlying principle, the small groups struggled with large chunks of scripture. Small groups had the opportunity to read almost the entire book of Jonah, engaging with the text rather than with what Colleen and I thought was important.

Youth have smarts

In recent years, Christian educators have realized that for too long our curriculums catered to a particular kind of youth to the exclusion of others. Reading and writing are two forms of intelligence but they are not the only forms. And when all our activities capitalize on the strengths of reading and writing we do a disservice to the many youth who are not gifted with those particular ways of learning. In many churches, curriculums like the workshop rotation model attempt to capitalize on the many different ways that people learn.

While this is true and we attempted to take into consideration these multiple ways of learning, we are still a people of the book. All youth must meet certain expectations about reading in school to graduate regardless of their natural way of learning. This is because each way of learning has strengths and weak-

nesses. As a people of the book, we as Christians must help everyone to read the Bible, regardless of what their natural inclination is. The CY curriculum attempted to give youth some tools so they could read and interpret scripture. Small groups had a chance to ask theological questions of the text, to try to understand the role of context in determining meaning and to probe the implications of different genres in interpretation.

The Bible is about we, not me

While at CY, another leader was asking some serious questions about the curriculum. Do we really want every youth to have the motivation and the tools to read scripture? What if they actually do it and then come up with some crazy ideas? Are there no boundaries to what the Bible might mean and shouldn't we teach youth some of these boundaries? My response is two fold. First, sometimes boundaries need pushing and youth, like Jesus in the temple, can act as the prophetic voice that pushes us as a church. The Word of God continues to speak to us today and we are a church always searching to hear what God says, both at the centre but also at the edges of our community.

Secondly, CY has a natural limit built into it—small groups. Jesus was not in the temple alone. No youth at CY read the Bible alone but always in the context of community. The Bible is always personal but it is never private for us as Presbyterians. We worship together, we study together, we break bread together. As it has been in history, we collectively listen for the Word of God to speak to us. Youth read scripture as individuals in groups of two, 12, 25 and 600 and in doing so modeled the ideal way of reading the Bible—as a church listening for God's voice to us today. – *Rev. Blair Bertrand is the Associate Minister for children, youth and families at St. Andrew's, Brampton, Ont.*

FOLLOWING GOD'S ROAD It was excitement-packed and Presbyterian

BY BROCK LEMISKI

Two years ago, I attended a similar conference called Triennium, held at Purdue University in Indiana, so I had some idea of what CY06 would include. I looked forward to a week filled with energetic participants and staff, ready to share the love of God with everyone they met. I was not disappointed. From the moment I stepped on campus at Brock University, I found myself surrounded by leaders eager to help me feel comfortable. I was blown away by the enthusiasm of all attending the conference. Throughout the week at CY06, I had the opportunity to meet new friends, enjoy new styles of worship and learn new ways in which to praise God.

Every day of CY06, the over 600 participants made their way down to worship. Once there, we were greeted by one of three Christian music groups—Glen Soderholm, Lost Pilgrims or The Witnesses. They combined their unique talents to help shape a worship service that inspired the hearts of everyone, and facilitated a calm and loving environment where the peace of Christ could be felt by all. In addition to the joyous music heard all week, other arts were incorporated into the worship services, including dramatic monologues, dances, skits and multimedia slideshows that were projected around the worship hall. These helped to keep the service exciting and it helped remind me that there is far more to praising the Lord than dutifully attending church and listening to a sermon once a week. It opened my eyes and my heart to the glory and majesty of our God.

The theme of the conference was taken from the book of Isaiah when God says, "Here is the road. Follow it." As part of the Conference Track, I was able to learn about much of the mission work The Presbyterian Church in Canada is involved in, locally and around the globe. The current focus of many of the church's mission projects is the eradication of AIDS and the creation of support systems for those living with AIDS, especially those in third world or developing countries. After attending CY06, I feel empowered to make a difference. It may be a small difference, or it may be very large, but I feel compelled to use my resources to find out what I can do to follow the path of others who have already taken up this work.



Brock Lemiski and friend

CY06 was a life-changing event that allowed for spiritual reflection, and provided nourishment for both body and soul. The people we met and the praises we sang will remain forever as memorable milestones as we travel God's road. We were there for a six-day, excitement-packed, Presbyterian conference and we had a blast! – *Brock Lemiski worships at Trafalger, Oakville, Ont.*

JESUS WALKS WITH YOU

Psalm 23 has a lasting power for generations



BY KRISTINE O'BRIEN

You know better than I do that being a teenager these days is far from easy. There is a lot of pressure from your parents and teachers. Life moves faster now than in any other generation and that brings with it more demands on your time. There is increasing violence in society and even in schools, you have readier access to drugs than ever before and diseases like AIDS make the world a scary place. Add to that the pain of heartache and the need to fit in that every young person has to cope with, and life can totally suck sometimes.

Psalm 23 has in it realities that people don't simply associate with religion and spirituality. It isn't an escape from the world or some kind of avoidance technique. It's an acknowledgement of real life. "I walk through the valley where the shadow of death is" sings Kanye West in Jesus Walks. He paints a picture of the people around him—and he understands that harsh reality is where God the shepherd is needed most. (See sidebar.)

That is exactly what Psalm 23 offers. It is a psalm of trust and it is generally thought by scholars that they are a direct response to the psalms of lament. Where the other psalms of lament lay out the difficulties of life with its loneliness, despair, betrayal and pain, Psalm 23 replies with images of God's goodness and love. It recognizes trouble but refuses to let it have the final say. It not only affirms the goodness of God but it talks back to the world. No matter what comes, God is good. The despair of the world isn't all there is. God can rescue. God can heal. God can save.

This psalm is a touchstone for us in our private moments or bad days. If you memorized it in Sunday school, you can recite it anytime you want. If you didn't, you probably know a few lines off by heart anyway: The Lord is my shepherd; my cup runneth over; I will fear no evil.

It may also be, however, that the psalm becomes a touchstone in your life. It may lead you to a life in which the defiant character of the psalm is lived out through acts of charity, service, teaching, sharing and helping. You might become a physician who acknowledges illness but works with God to bring healing. You might become an artist who knows a world of darkness but creates images of light and laughter. You might simply share your money or your time as a sign that you trust that God is up to good things, and you believe it so much that you want to help.

We know that this psalm has had staying power in the world for generations. May it also have staying power in your life, becoming a touchstone for living and a defiant word in the face of whatever trouble the world can dish out.

– Rev. Kristine O'Brien is at Trafalgar, Oakville, Ont. This is an excerpt of one of her meditations at Canada Youth 2006. To read the full transcript of both of her sermons please see the Record's website.

Psalm 23 – Hip Hop Prayer Book

The Lord is my shepherd;
There's no better protector
I lean back in the green grass
Walk by the water and serine paths
When I trip, he gets my soul back
I'm never led to my old trash
Cause He's Jehovah and know that!
And though I stroll through a cold Ave
And though I creep through death hood
I know a Pro's got my whole back
I can relax, every step's good
He even set up a breakfast
Had all the haters on their best foot
And my head is anointed
He detest disappointments
And there's a mess where my coin are kept
Because He blesses when He on deck
I'm live'n this for the long stretch
In his crip til my day of death

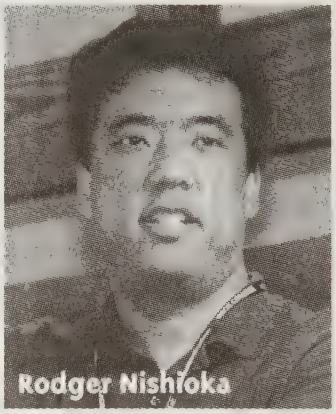
The Hip Hop Prayer Book
Church Publishing Incorporated
New York, New York

To the hustlas, killers, murderers, drug dealers even the strippers
(Jesus walks with them)
To the victims of Welfare for we living in hell here hell yeah
(Jesus walks with them)
Now hear ye hear ye want to see Thee more clearly
I know he hear me when my feet get weary
Cuz we're the almost nearly extinct
We rappers are role models we rap we don't think
I ain't here to argue about his facial features
Or here to convert atheists into believers
I'm just trying to say the way school need teachers
The way Kathie Lee needed Regis that's the way y'all need Jesus

–Jesus Walks, Kanye West

MAKE DISCIPLES NOT JUST GOOD PRESBYTERIANS

Youth demand vital communities and ethical integrity


Rodger Nishioka

BY AMY MACLACHLAN

Rodger Nishioka has a passion for young people. His call to work with youth is one where his deepest joy meets a hunger in the world. "Selfishly, I gain so much more than I give. But that's the nature of the kingdom and the gospel. It's humbling. This gives me an opportunity to share what has been given to me."

Nishioka was the plenary speaker for the Youth Ministry Training Track at Canada Youth 2006. He currently serves as associate professor of Christian Education at Columbia Theological Seminary in Georgia, and previously spent 12 years as a staff person in youth and young adult ministry for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

His engaging lecture style and warm demeanour had his CY06 students laughing, debating and later complimenting his vast knowledge and experience. And though Nishioka praised the youth leaders he met during the week and was encouraged by their dedication, he had some concerns about how youth ministry often unfolds. "I'm wary that we are more consumed with entertaining our young people than engaging them," he told the *Record*. "We are more worried about keeping them in the church than shaping disciples, and we are more interested in passing on a tradition—however rich—than we are in challenging them to live the gospel in whatever ways Christ is calling them to do and be."

He went on to speak of a tension between tradition and "traditioning," or what he referred to as "creating good Presbyterians." "Our goal is not to make Presbyterians, but disciples. There can be a flavour of Presbyterianism, but that isn't a goal of a life lived faithfully. Tradition is the living faith of the dead, but traditionalism is the dead faith of the living. We should value our traditions in living expressions of our faith, but I have no interest in traditionalism. That's a dead faith.

"We confuse the fundamental truth that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow, with the idea that the expression of Jesus Christ on earth, which is the church, has to stay the same. We've gone from rotary dial phones to Bluetooth technology, from vinyl LPs to iPods, and from Model-Ts to hybrids. As uncomfortable as it may be, if change is the nature of life, how do we accommodate that change in the church of Jesus Christ?"

Young people are yearning for three things, said Nishioka: community and belonging; theological vitality, which he explained as having passion and authenticity; and ethical integrity. "They want help with the tough decisions about life, including right and wrong and beyond. As a church, I hope we provide those things."

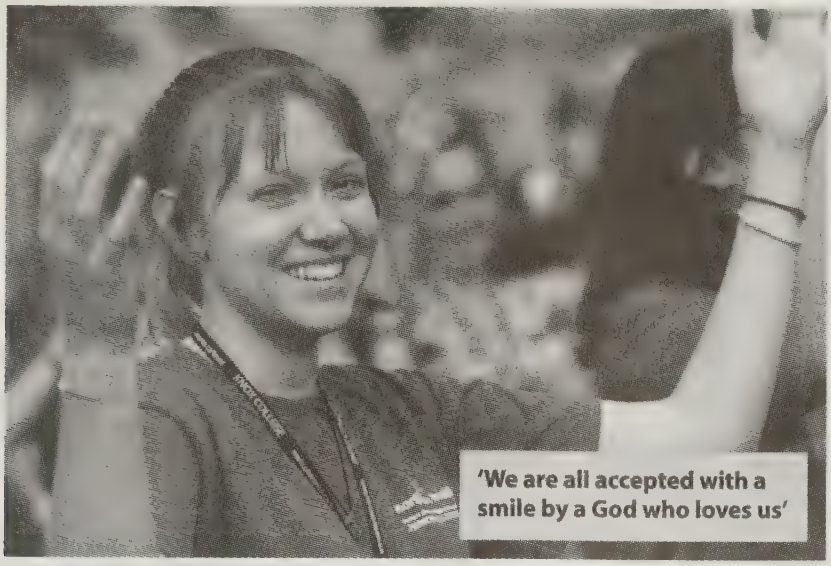
Events like CY06 create mountain top experiences but churches are not very good at providing follow-up for their youth. "How we receive and welcome them back is huge," said Nishioka. "Churches that do this well give young people the opportunity to share with the congregation, through testimony, photos and music. It's beyond story-telling."

He suggested congregations be open to changing their worship style to include a particularly meaningful song to the young person, hanging a t-shirt from the event in the church to remind everyone where their young people went and to honour that time in their lives, asking young people to write regular reports or reflections for the church newsletter, and using Bible studies that were used at the youth event.

He also said that because many of the contemporary songs used during worship at youth events focus on emotion, congregations should build upon that emotion later. "Young people may not be attentive to the theology behind the songs or aware of why a song was chosen. We must do thoughtful reflection on the words and why it evoked those kinds of feelings. What does it say about God? About us? I love that it starts with feelings, that's okay. It's like having a crush—you're caught up—but to sustain that you must engage in thoughtfulness so you're not giving your self away."

"I'm not worried about The Presbyterian Church in Canada," he said. "I'm so impressed with the adults here, and with their care and compassion and with what they're willing to give. I'm very grateful for that."



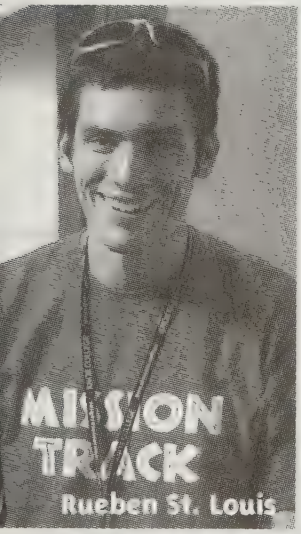


'We are all accepted with a smile by a God who loves us'

SEEKING IDENTITY AND VOICE

Canada Youth 2006 is the place to find community

BY REUBEN ST. LOUIS



A man had seven sons and one day when he was very old and felt his time was at an end, he called his seven sons to him. He handed a stick to his eldest son and asked him to break it, which his son did with ease. He then handed two sticks to the youngest son. This son was asked to do the same and he broke the sticks in half with some effort. He then brought out a bundle of seven sticks tied together with twine and he asked if any of them could break the bundle. Each son took a turn but none of them could muster the strength to perform the task. Their father smiled and asked them to sit at his feet. The old man then said, "and so it is to be with you. On your own you can be easily broken but together you will be able to withstand anything."

This parable encompasses for me everything that Canada Youth represents and upholds. As the man gathered his sons, so this conference brought together youth, young adults and adults (the people of God) from across Canada. The old man's purpose was to teach and invest in his sons and CY is a place for youth and the church to share, learn and grow in faith. Young and old are challenged as the sons were and whether we succeed or fail, we are all accepted with a smile by a God who loves us. Yet for me, the greatest symbolism is contained in the bundle of sticks tied together. It is a symbol of community, bound with the love of God. Canada Youth is a place for youth who feel isolated and misunderstood in their communities, including the communities of faith, to realize they are not alone but are a part of something vibrant and alive. It gives them an identity and voice which is greater than their own. It is at Canada Youth that youth can feel connected to the Church and to their God. The passion and excitement of Canada Youth is a shining example of what the church can do and strives to be.

My hope is that as we take a lesson from this simple parable that we will also take a lesson from the spirit of Canada Youth. Our youth are not a lost cause but a God-led force with the potential to move mountains and shake the very foundations of the church. Therefore, we need to continue to generously invest in the younger generations because I guarantee that in the future we will reap what we sow. However, do not think that I believe that youth are the future of the church. They are the church now along with children, adults and seniors. So let the wider church join with them in celebration, ministry and in community, bound with the love of our Creator and Redeemer. Amen. – *Reuben St. Louis is the Youth in Mission coordinator. You can find his first CD on the Record's website feature called In Song.*

BEING YOUNG IS TOUGH

The Toronto Star recently reported on World Population Day (July 11), begun in 1987 to draw attention to the day that the earth's population hit 5 billion. This year's theme was "Being Young is Tough." The day highlighted the difficulties many of the world's young people face in their daily lives. Below are some of the facts that were reported:

- Nearly half of the world's people are under age 25. One quarter of those survive on less than $1 a day
- 82 million girls in developing countries who are now between 10 and 17 will be married before their 18th birthday
- Every day, 14,000 people become infected with HIV/AIDS; half of them are under 25.Young women are especially vulnerable
- One of every three unemployed workers in Canada is under age 25
- Almost two-thirds of young people age 20 to 24 live at home with their parents, many because they can't afford to leave
- Statistics Canada reports that 6.5 per cent — more than a quarter of a million people between 15 and 24 — met the criteria for a major depression in the past year, compared with 5 per cent of adults



The Witnesses are Josh Vander Veen, Scott Marsh, Reuben Sweet, Heather Brown, Hillary Hulzinga and Jenn Kerr

WITNESSING AT WORSHIP

With more than 600 cheering fans singing, clapping and dancing along to their music, this newbie Christian band is on a natural high. "It's a better response than we thought we'd get. It's more than we could have imagined," said Hillary Hulzinga. "We were told they'd go crazy, but we didn't expect this. It's such a thrill."



The Witnesses were created for Canada Youth 2006, and are comprised of musicians from the Hamilton, Ont., area. Seventeen-year-old Hulzinga also leads the praise team at Knox, Waterdown. "I thought it would be a good opportunity, and a great experience," she said.

Hulzinga has been crowned the band's leader, as she was the one approached by CY06 worship planner Rev. Susan Kerr to create a band for the event—a first in CY history. The piano-playing Hulzinga held auditions and by November, the band was practicing every Saturday night.

"I see this as a learning experience," said Jenn Kerr, 26, who lends her vocal, keyboard and flute talents to the group. "Could this be the next step where God wants me to go? It has caused me to do a lot of thinking."





The band is rounded out by vocalist Heather Brown, 17, of Knox, Waterdown, drum player Josh Vander Veen, 18, Knox, Waterdown, guitarist Scott Marsh, 17, of Chalmers, and 17-year-old Reuben Sweet of Chedoke, on bass. Their various talents and musical tastes allow them to play anything from contemporary Christian songs, to traditional pieces, to mainstream pop and rock. Hulzinga's fiddle talents even prompted a folksy, country piece that had many of the youth rushing the stage to dance and jig.

The CY event is by far the largest audience The Witnesses have played for, but it won't be the last. Before singing their last song at Canada Youth, the band had already sparked excitement among church-goers, with requests for CDs and performances in local congregations.

"I'll remember all the energy," Hulzinga told the *Record*. "Even when I'm tired and don't want to go on, I get all my energy back on stage. As soon as we start playing, they go crazy." – *AM*


David White

A MUSICAL FEAST

Worship at Canada Youth 2006 featured a lot more than a stately organ and a gowned choir. Each two-hour service was packed with lively music, compelling sermons, dance and drama. Organized by Rev. Bob Geddes of South Gate Church, Hamilton, and Rev. Susan Kerr, the worship times featured participants and collaborators from across the country.

The house band, The Witnesses, was made up of six young people from congregations in the Hamilton area. They led worship on most days. The Lost Pilgrims are comprised of ministers, elders, members and the principal clerk of the General Assembly. Their bluegrass sound had the youth shouting and singing along. The band also played at CY03. Glen Soderholm and David White opened each evening with a quieter sound of acoustic guitars and percussion, acting as the call to worship. Soderholm is well known among the Presbyterian Church as he is an ordained minister, but now manages his music ministry, A Moveable Feast.

A girls' dance group performed two numbers. Known as D-ROCC (Dancers Relying on Christ Completely), they are based in Trinity Church in Oro, Ont. They are led by Deb Grant, and are an active part of Trinity's worship program. A mime and drama group called ACTS made two stirring performances; one being a two-man dramatic interpretation of the story of Zacchaeus. The group was also at CY00 and is from Toronto Chinese Presbyterian Church. Their leader is Howard Eng. A drama group replaced a regular sermon on the second-last day of CY06, acting out a creative and contemplative rendition of the Good Samaritan story. The five actors are members of South Gate Church, Hamilton. Their director was Anne Cheeseman, the church's secretary. – *AM*

GOD HAS A PLAN



BY MARLY CAIL

"What are you going to do with your life?" The question seems innocuous enough. When I was very young, maybe about six or seven or possibly younger, I was certain that I was going to be an Olympic speed skater. My father had taught me to skate when I was very young and we would always go to the rink on Saturdays. I would race against the big boys, and I would always win. Looking back, I am quite sure that they probably let me win. But I decided, at age five, that I would one day be an Olympic speed skater.

My career aspirations have changed just a little since kindergarten. I have gone through various phases. I have wanted to be a singer, actress, writer, veterinarian, teacher and when I graduated from high school, I was sure that I was going to be a dentist. I graduated this year and with applications going out again, the question—what are you going to do with your life?—has reappeared. Most of our parents have tried to set us into the one-career-for-life path. Studies have shown that people my age will most likely go through at least four career changes in our lives. In my past four years of university, I have seen a lot of my friends change their minds about what they are going to do with their lives. They fail a math class, so they realize that being a high school math teacher is not for them; they get their practice test for the dentistry school exam and realize that they do not work well with their hands; some have a light bulb moment where the future is suddenly rendered clear. I no longer want to be a dentist. Halfway through my first year of university, I realized I did not want to spend my life looking into other people's mouths (but if that is what you do and are great at it then good for you!). I decided that I wanted to be a teacher. I had the opportunity to supply teach at my old schools and I loved it. I cannot picture myself doing anything else.

I am not worried about the future. Jeremiah 29:11 says: "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." I have nothing to fear, God has a divine plan for me. Maybe in a couple of years, I will realize that teaching is not the right job for me, but something will pan out. Matthew 6:25 says: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?" My mother wants me to worry about my life and what I am going to do. I am going to follow God's life plan. – *Marly Cail of Harcourt, N.B., attended CY06.*

Venturing a jail break from history

Remember the past accurately and acknowledge the mistakes

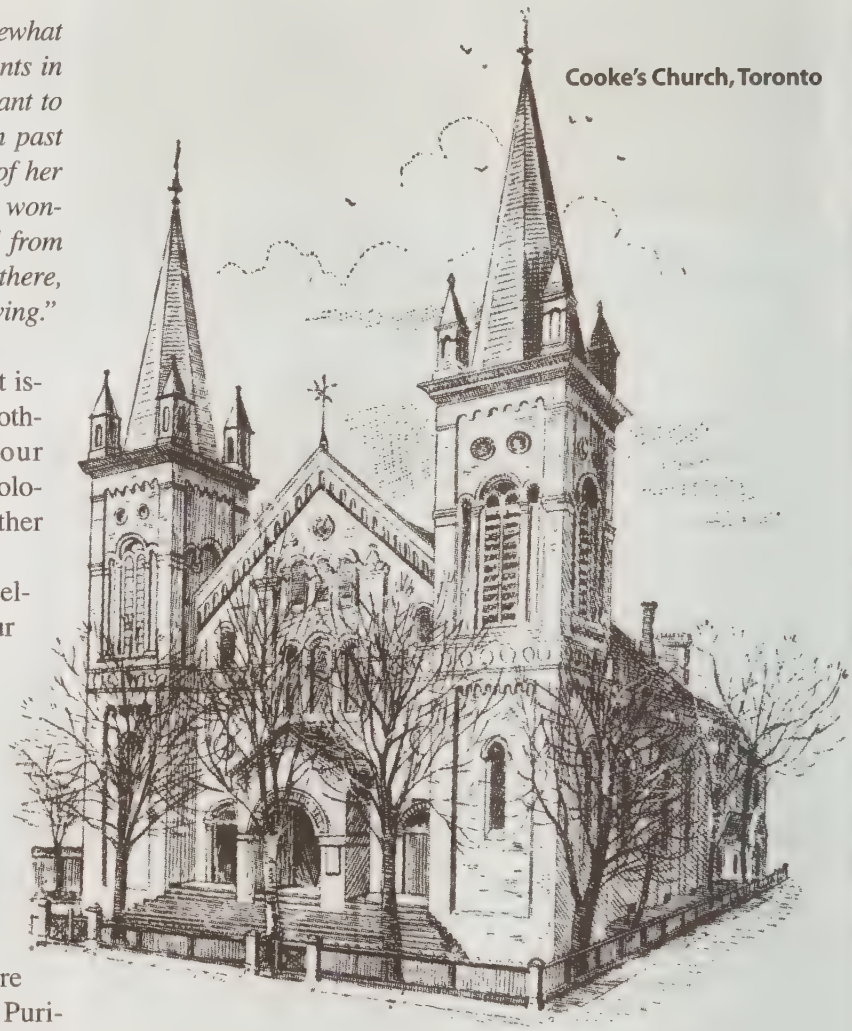
BY BARRY MACK

"I submit that since 1925 our church has wandered somewhat haphazardly, goaded by the memory of certain heroic events in our past, feeding on the manna of our own history.... I want to see our church set free from preoccupation with her own past and her own future, free to emerge from that wilderness of her own choosing and enter the modern city, the terrible and wonderful new world where one thing above all is required from Christians—a celebration of the Christ who is already there, waiting for His followers to come out into the tempest of living."

I'll leave Stuart MacDonald's discussion (July/August issue) of who is or isn't, was or wasn't, a "prophet" to others. I read Joe McClelland's diagnosis of our plight—both in 1965 and 40 years later—as: "It's the theology, stupid." Get the theology right, and a lot of the other things needful will fall into place.

Why was "our pond" lukewarm 40 years ago? McLelland's answer was an overly rigid understanding of our denominational identity in terms of Westminster Confession of Faith and a Puritanical ethos. He attacked the "image-makers of our church, especially those who would keep us pure by facing backward towards the 17th century. We are confronted, almost intimidated, by an image of evangelical Christianity which seeks to link the Presbyterian mystique of confessionalism to a Presbyterian ethos of conservative, middle class Puritanism." In the midst of all the tumult and revolutionary excitement of the 1960s, he wondered, "Are we *trying* to be irrelevant?" His charge was that our Puritanism effectively prevented real evangelism because it was not "seeker sensitive." It didn't engage the world in fundamental questions of faith and made us too uptight, stodgy and hung up to be able to dig the creative ferment of the 1960s. While the rest of the world celebrated Expo 67 and God's big party in the Secular City, we had exiled ourselves from life's feast and sulked "in a wilderness of our own choosing." Instead of proclaiming God's Yes to the world, all we could do was to say No.

The challenge he posed was for the church "to get with it" and to move confidently into the world with the Word of Life; for ministers to try "beer with the boys" instead of "tea with the ladies." "The church does not draw its strength from its past—not from its saints and heroes and reformers", he insisted, "but only from the living Christ whose servants they were.



Cooke's Church, Toronto

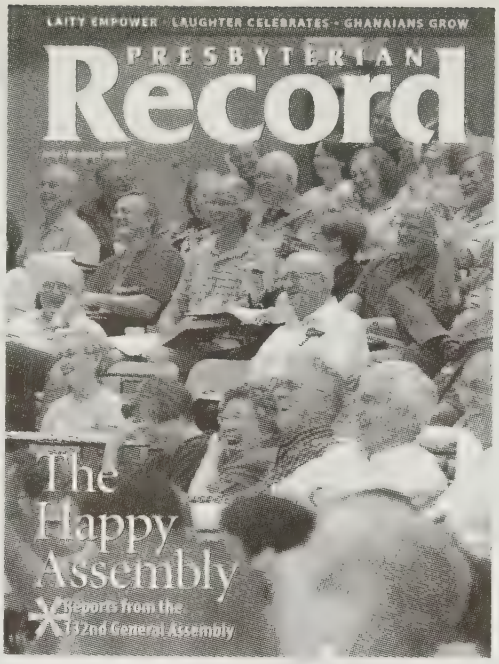
The Presbyterian fate was to trade in Cadillacs for Pintos. It gives rise to paralysis and regret

I am angry with our church because it is running scared, afraid that it may lose its life, afraid of what tomorrow will bring. But surely as Christians we have really only one message, one clear Word of God to proclaim—a Word of life, of victory over death? We are the people who know about death and about its Master."

Our focus needed to shift from the past to the present and God's call into the future. Echoing Harvey Cox, McLelland called for us to "free the Gospel even from our churchliness and our piety, that it may get a proper hearing in the world where it belongs." And he lamented our apparent lack of pas-

sion for the world for which Christ died. "Where is our rage, our righteous indignation, our passion against the reign of death, the fear of death, the arms of death which spread like tentacles to stifle brotherhood and social justice and peace?" True evangelism was not a matter of trying to get people like ourselves to join our club but "a kind of celebration to which mankind is cordially invited, a kind of invitation to the dance, to the gay and lighthearted experience of life in depth, life lived out of the power of the One who stubbornly draws life out of death, who is more than a match for our deadness—our individual and also our institutional deadness."

Forty year later, he notes that the particular issue of the status of the WCF in defining our denominational identity has since been resolved by being broadened: the recognition of the "parallel standards" of the Reformation as part of our confessional heritage and the recent adoption (as these things go) of *Living Faith*. And the ethos seems to be lightening up, too, if the cover of last month's *Record* is any indicator.



The church's ethos seems to be lightening up, too, if last month's cover is any indicator.

So why are our numbers still in free fall? We still seem to be in some sort of wilderness, although there is some question about whether it is really "of our own choosing." McLelland points to the current confusion amidst the "strident claims of this post-modern age of technology and hedonism, when everything has become sexualized and trivialized." Stuart MacDonald asserts "Christendom has popped like a balloon, and we are left wondering what to do. We live in an indifferent culture, one that is not going to support our values or our views."

So where (on the biblical map) is here? And how should we react? Are we still in the wilderness of exile? I vote yes—with the caveat that our 70 years in Babylon are about up. Think Ezekiel dreaming dreams of a new temple and preparing the people for the task of rebuilding. My sense is that all the mission and vision statements that we are currently producing are on target—even if the process sometimes gets tedious. And some of McLelland's 40-year-old suggestions for restructuring the way we operate as Presbyterians may be helpful here.

The revolutionary ferment of the 1960s has finally run its course and we are now on the brink of religious revival. It is the modern, secularized Western project (Man and His World—the theme of Expo '67) that has popped like a balloon in the face of resurgent Islam. The secular city is getting religious again. So how do we position ourselves to surf this wave?

It is probably true, as McLelland says, "if we do not have a proper theology, we cannot meet the needs and challenges of today. Because the arena is the field of ideas: in science, political economy, global affairs, it is the clash of ideas that is making the world go round." But my hunch is that the deepest source of our malaise is not that we are no longer the sharpest knives in the drawer. The Pentecostals have done OK without thinking too many deep thoughts.

Our current problem has less to do with deficient theology than with a history that we do not understand very well. How do we remember the past in ways that add up to life rather than death? McLelland notes that his anger "is tinged with regret at what might have been, if we had taken more fire from our past heritage and less of its ashes."

I remember a conversation with Murray Ross, the church architect, about the time that the decision was taken to sell old Cooke's church in downtown Toronto in 1981. He wondered why Presbyterians couldn't just regard churches like cars. There comes a time, he said, when it made sense to trade them in for a new model. I pointed out that the Presbyterian fate was to trade in Cadillacs for Pintos. It gives rise to paralysis and regret.

Those now empty galleries in large rural churches are full of ghosts telling us that we are not the people our ancestors were. Although we do not remember it very accurately, we suffer from a sense of diminishment in relation to that past. It hovers over us as a paralyzing and debilitating presence, a miasma that gets in the way of seeing clearly the opportunities and possibilities in the present. It is easy for us to wallow in nostalgia and despondency, perhaps even hopelessness, a temptation to mourn a glorious and heroic past that has been torn away from us—not unlike some aboriginal people or displaced Highlanders. In McLelland's words, "God's presence seems more real to us in the past than in the here and now." This means that our present task of re-envisioning and reconstructing the temple is complicated by memories about the scale and magnificence of the original.

The road to freedom from the debilitating ghosts from our past runs through that past rather running away from it. In 1967, Stanford Reid, McLelland's conservative alter ego, heard him preaching revolution and "a negation of the past, a cutting of ourselves off from what has gone before, including the Westminster Confession of Faith." He heard McLelland as advocating a "watered down" ecumenical theology that amounted to a betrayal of our tradition. It was an overstatement which failed to recognize the extent to which McLelland's critique was a lover's quarrel, but one can see what he was getting at. Theological creativity is never a bad thing but our greater need at the moment is psychological exorcism. We suffer, as a denomination, from a historical hangover. It is tied to "1925 and All That," to the heroism of those stubborn Covenanters digging in their heels against Stuart tyranny in the 17th century, the glories of the Scottish church in the 19th century. And the fact that we mostly ran Canada in those days. We are the remnants of a displaced establishment.

As any good shrink knows, historical ghosts are not easily

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The secular city is getting religious again. So how do we position ourselves to surf this wave?

exorcised. One cannot simply jettison the past and start again because what is repressed comes back to haunt you. How many young Presbyterian ministers have come to grief by trying to implement a revolutionary agenda on a congregation that was incapable of articulating its faith coherently—but know with absolute certainty that faith wasn't what that new minister said it was. Pasts that are remembered only dimly may exercise enormous power over the present and tradition is terribly restrictive and oppressive if it amounts to a taboo on doing anything different than "the way we did it when I was young." But exorcism of such ghosts requires more than revolutionary rejection and turning away. Freud advocated the "talking cure" and argued that liberation required the making conscious of that which lay unconscious and repressed. We can be freed from what is binding about our past only by exploring and naming it; celebrating and grieving it in God's grace.

In some cases, perhaps condemnation and corporate confession are appropriate. But glib confession without honest and thorough self-examination amounts to evasion. What is required is a detailed retelling of the past, a recalling of its textures, challenges, achievements and failures; an honest attempt to remember and assess both its strengths and weaknesses; a place for grateful celebration as well as tearful confession. When Christians speak about "coming to terms with their past" this is what we mean.

Such a conviction was a big part of my motivation for studying Presbyterian history. I discovered that I didn't have to go to Latin America to encounter what Paulo Freire called in *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* the "culture of silence." I could find it in the typical rural Presbyterian church anywhere in Canada. I recognized it in the farmers who stood at the back of churches like solitary blocks of granite and answered questions in monosyllabic grunts. The "faith of our father and mothers" was obviously important to these people and exerted a powerful spell; it was tied to memories of a strength and power that contrasted favourably with the superficiality of present TV culture. But was not a faith that they were capable of putting into words or passing on to the next generation. And when traditions cease to be able to articulate themselves, they die.

Think of church history as pastoral care. People have to be loved into change and that includes a knowledge and appreciation of our past. Our task is to remember accurately, celebrate what was good about our history, try to puzzle out causal links, and acknowledge the mistakes. All so that we can then reverently and gratefully put it aside and get on with God's call into the future.

Rev. Dr. Barry Mack is minister at St. Andrew's, St. Lambert, Longueuil, Que., and teaches a course in Presbyterian history at Presbyterian College, Montreal.



Rev. Shirley M. Jeffery, the first woman to be ordained as a minister of word and sacrament in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, standing in front of Appin Presbyterian Church, in 1968.

PHOTO: SUN MEDIA CORP

A WOMAN'S CALLING

Reflecting on 40 years of women's ordination

40th ANNIVERSARY

All women members of the church should accept the responsibility and be given the opportunity of serving Jesus Christ and their fellow human beings in all areas and occupations of life as the members of his body. This in turn should be the example to the world of how women should be accepted in all spheres of activity.

– Study paper on the role of women in the church, 1964

40th ANNIVERSARY

Cutting to the core of identity

This anniversary marks great struggles and wondrous blessings

BY J. DORCAS GORDON

The facts of the decision to ordain women to ministry, both to the eldership and to word and sacrament are before me as I write. The timeline for decision-making is so easily set out. In 1953, the Synod of Manitoba sent an overture to the General Assembly on the place of women in the church, and in the following year clarified that "yes" the overture included the ordination of women. In 1955, the dialogue began and continued with a committee and then a new committee—more overtures, a "no" decision. More committees at work, another vote and in 1966 the decision is made. It all seems very Presbyterian!

However, a timeline contains very little of the story. Only in reading between the lines do we get the real stuff of history. The timeline does not indicate that this story began long before the Manitoba overture. There is no reference to its origins in scripture where the story attests to Martha and Mary Magdalene and Prisca and Junia, to all those women in the early Christian movement who exercised ministry in full partnership with Peter and Paul, as disciples, missionaries and apostles. Ordination as we know it did not exist way back then. In fact, Paul himself was continually called to attest to the communities he founded that his call to be an apostle was authentic—that his ministry and his gospel were valid.

Nor can a timeline help us experience the personal pain embedded in such decision-making. I became part of the story in 1969 when I began studies at Knox College. Writing this article brings back memories that are so vivid, memories of my own moments of hope and despair. It brings back my experiences of living and working in the church after the decision was made, after all was supposedly resolved! I can only imagine the stamina it must have taken for those women through the long years of decision-making to listen to and to be subjected to a roller coaster of hope and despair.



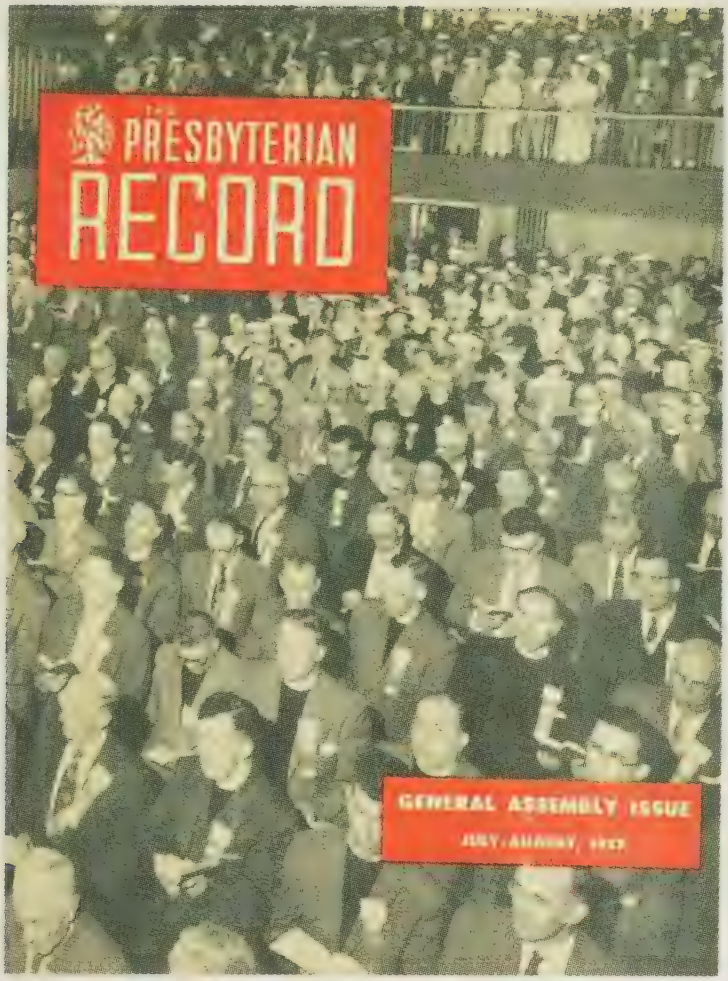


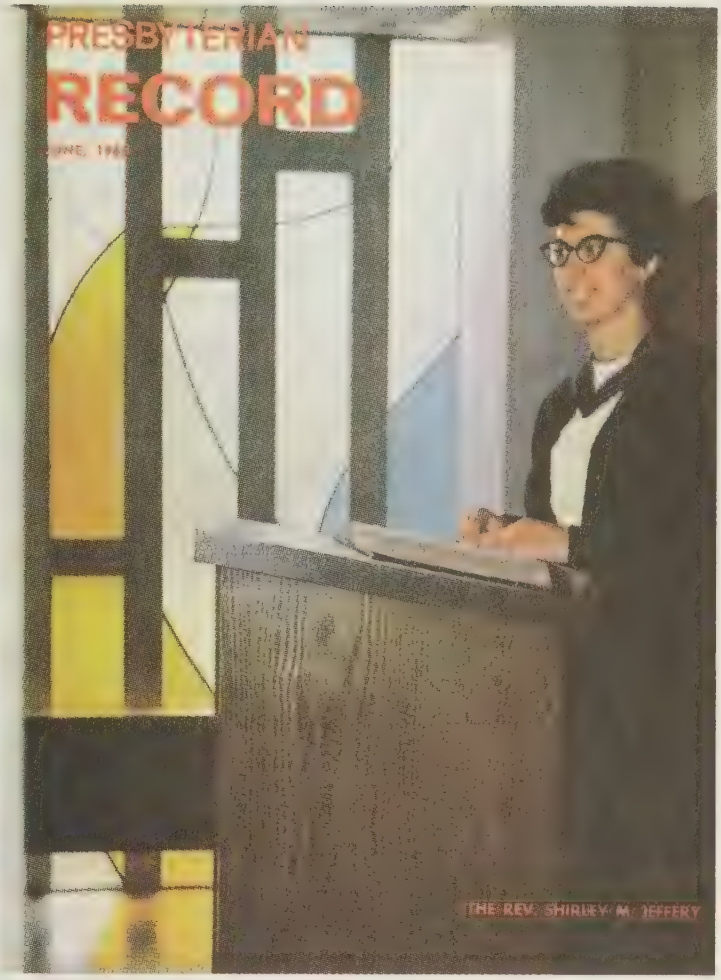


(Left) Mrs. George Forrester and Miss Mary Whale, the first women commissioners to General Assembly, 1967. Joan McInnis (top right), St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Arthur, Ont., and Wyn Thomas (bottom left), of Fallingbrook Presbyterian Church, Scarborough, Ont., were both ordained as elders on July 3, 1966.

Nowhere does the timeline acknowledge that for women the debate around whether or not women can be ordained cuts to the core of our identity as human beings created by God. For men to be ordained, or not, required the church to recognize and affirm gifts for ministry. No man has ever had to listen to these words: "Because you are a man, you cannot be a minister." For women in those years gifts and call did not matter; one's sexual identity alone determined whom God called and to what ministry.

While not part of the initial struggle, I can still remember the great laughter that greeted my first tentative announcement that I thought I would go to Knox to study theology. Notice I did not divulge that perhaps I had a call to ministry. Looking back I am surprised how deeply I had intuited the church's ambivalence





What a difference a decade makes. Left, General Assembly 1957. Right, Shirley Jeffery on the June 1968 cover. However, the first woman moderator was not elected until 1992, and less than a third of current Presbyterians ministers are female.

about women's call to ministry! Even more worrying is that this ambivalence is something I continue to see in 2006 as I listen to women, often from the ethnic communities within the PCC, speak hesitantly about a call to ministry. It is hard to find the right words when you know that the culture within which you have been nurtured holds such ambivalence about you as a woman called to ordained ministry.

In 1966, the decision was made and many within the church rejoiced. However, 1966 and the end of the timeline was really only the beginning. The church now had to turn its attention to what such a decision meant in terms of its everyday life. It needed to make a huge cultural shift, and here my experience would suggest that not only did it do so very slowly, but also that it is not yet completed. There are numerous stories, at one and the same time painful and humorous, delightful and just plain sad, of the ambivalence with which this shift was made. A few personal reminiscences will suffice: "My goodness we've never had a woman preach before—we could hear you!" "Now that you have children, you will surely give up ministry." Perhaps the most painful was the decision of one family to leave the congregation in which I served, and my recognition that no matter what gifts I had, my femaleness closed for them any possibility for effective ministry.

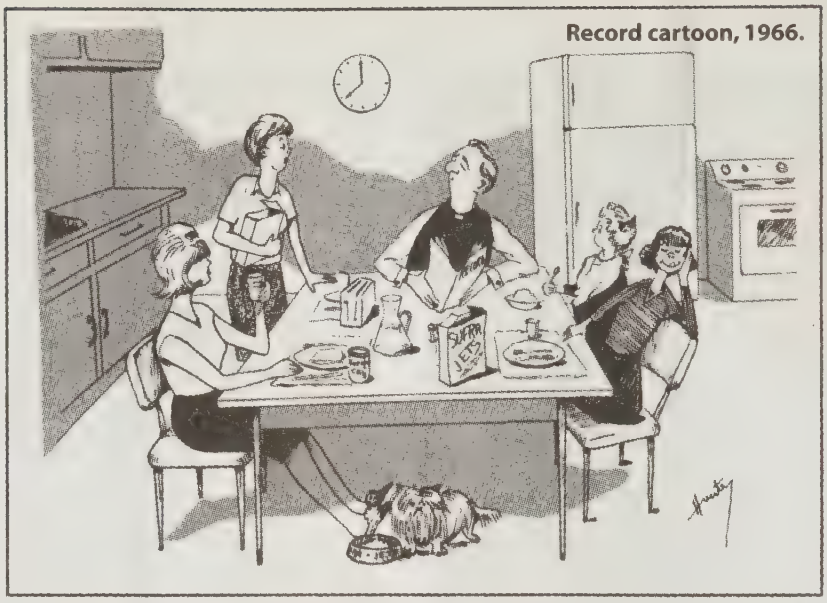
One of the most painful moments in the living out of this decision was the liberty of conscience debates of the early 80s. It was a defining moment. Had an institutional shift actually taken place? Was the partnership of women and men now "bred in the bone" of the denomination? Or was it something that was subject to individual choice? I know these were acrimonious days with much anger on both sides, but our denomination is not unique. The question as to whether the church should require its leadership to commit to participation in the ordination of women to word and sacrament and to the eldership is a question of institutional identity—of its gospel values. If some opted out, could the full partnership of women and men in ministry ever be a reality?

This is the time in my life when I can most keenly imagine what it was like for those women in the 50s and 60s. I realize that I have suppressed much of the emotion and content of those debates. I do remember consoling one of my colleagues who came away in tears from a particularly painful meeting. If I am honest, I need to confess how devalued I, as a daughter of God called to ministry, felt. Those were indeed painful days! This debate took its toll. How I rejoice when the new generation of women and men who were personally unscathed by these debates express such astonishment and dismay that this actually happened and such a short time ago.

An anniversary is a time to look back, but it is also a time to

discern the future. Let me leave with you some personal reflections:

- Although 40 years have passed, the PCC must continue to work at the institutional shifts that still need to be made in order to express fully its commitment to the partnership of women and men in ministry. In my work I continue to see signs that younger ordained women are perceived and received differently than younger ordained men, particularly, but not always, if they are married and planning a family. There can be no stained glass ceilings!
- Although 40 years have passed, around the world many women still struggle to get to 1953; others hope for 1966 while others are presently going through the painful days of the early 80s. If we believe in the full partnership of women and men we need to stand in solidarity with them in their struggle and to use our resources as a denomination to call for change.
- And finally, the church, given its experience since 1966, must honestly continue to ask itself difficult questions. What have we learned from the past 40 years of shared ministry? We need to celebrate how blessed the church is through the ministry of those who were outside and voted inside. Even more, however, those who were outside and now inside must speak in truth about the pain of exclusion and challenge the church to work to end all such exclusions. To ask ourselves what it means in our time that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, no slave or free, not male or female. The experience through the ages is that these differences have been sites of great struggle and places of wondrous blessing when the church in response to the Holy Spirit has included where it initially excluded.



"You'll get your breakfast when you promise to vote yes for the ordination of women at Assembly today."

Rev. Dr. J. Dorcas Gordon is the principal of Knox College, Toronto, and associate professor of biblical interpretation.

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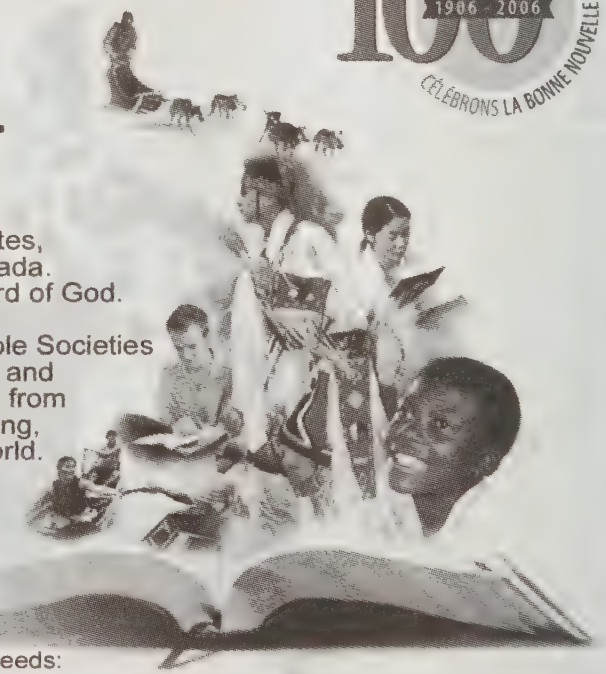
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Convinced of the call

Women need not utter any apologies

BY REBEKAH MITCHELL

Forty years ago a major decision was made at General Assembly. After days of debate, the question of the ordination of women as elders and as ministers of word and sacrament was put to a vote. Despite a number of recorded dissents, the recommendation passed and women were able to be ordained.

As a woman finishing her Master of Divinity in the early part of the new millennium, I am aware that the playing field is completely different than it was in the 60s and that it has not yet been completely leveled.

I believe that God calls whom God will when God wills and our responsibility as believers is to answer that call

In the early days of exploring my call, my father asked me if I thought God could call women to the ministry. My eyebrows snapped together and I answered, "Of course."

He offered a kind smile and said, "You misunderstand. I'm not suggesting that God does not call women, I'm asking you to provide theological and biblical insight to why you think God calls women ministers. You will be challenged on this during your ministry and you need to know what answer you will provide."

I had no idea how right he was. A few weeks later, some well-meaning Christians from the Southern United States quoted scripture to convince me the Bible is clearly against the idea of women ministers. I became well acquainted with those two famous passages (1 Corinthians 14:34 and 1 Timothy 2:12) as I searched for a response that remained biblical but supported women as ministers and elders. I studied scripture carefully as I prepared a reply to those well-meaning American brothers and sisters, and I have continued to keep my eye on the issue throughout my time at Knox College.

At the end of three years of theological education, I can say I am convinced that Christ valued the input and talents of women and that the wider biblical narrative argues for redemption regardless of gender. I believe that God calls whom God will when God wills and our responsibility as believers is to answer that call.

The fact remains that within Christianity, and even within The Presbyterian Church in Canada, there are those who would prefer that their minister be a man. Rumours of those who are not convinced of women in the ministry have reached my ears in various congregations that I have been acquainted with throughout the years of my education. My male peers at Knox have often been surprised when I have discussed this reality with them. But I highly doubt there are any women in ministry who have not come across the occasional naysayer.

Nonetheless, I have often found it more of a barrier to be a single person (as in, not married) in the ministry than a woman. This is good news, on one level: it demonstrates the change that has come about in the last 40 years. I can honestly say that I have never felt my gender was an issue at school or during the discernment process. On another level, it leads me to ask why there is not a greater focus on the problems that single people in the ministry might face and the unique aptitudes they might bring to it.

In The Presbyterian Church in Canada in the year 2006, it is a certainty that women in the ministry are not the controversy they were 40 years ago. However, there are still challenges to be faced. I believe that the best way that women seeking ordination in the Presbyterian church can face these challenges is to seek a balance between being unapologetic about our femaleness and making no issue of it. In the end, we must be strong in faith, convinced of our call, and rely utterly on the One who has called us.

Rebekah Mitchell recently graduated from Knox College, Toronto.

She managed just fine

1 Samuel 17:37 On the shoulders of giants and with faith like David.

I sat before the re-certification committee of presbytery. My future was in their hands and their power gigantic from my point of view at the time. About 10 people in a room, mostly men, asking very serious questions. On this particular day, an interviewer turned to me and asked, "How are you going to manage with a 10-month-old baby?"

"A what?" I asked in astonishment. I then explained that I did not have a 10-month-old, nor was I going to have a baby any time soon. I wonder if any of our forefathers in ministry were ever asked that question? – *Rev. Vicki Homes graduated from Knox College, Toronto, in 1999 and is the minister at Summerside, P.E.I.*

Christ calls all to discipleship

Women's ordination is resolved; now it's time for other cries to be heard

BY MARJORIE ROSS

I was in Nigeria, working with the the Board of Missions (now the WMS) when the General Assembly made the decision to ordain women as teaching and ruling elders, and my memories of that first debate are all secondhand. I have a much clearer memory of the second debate in the early 1980s (often referred to as the "liberty of conscience" debate).

Our church has been blessed with many fine ministers as a result of the 1966 decision. I count a number of these women as my friends. Yet, I think that decision led to several unintended consequences. I regret the disappearance of that strong leadership by laywomen, which was a blessing to our church pre-1966. Once the barriers were removed, many women working in various capacities in the church began (for understandable reasons) to pursue ordination to ministry of word and sacrament. Many assumed that any woman moving into a position of leadership in the church for which they would receive a stipend would naturally take steps to qualify as a minister of word and sacrament. Several people (all women ministers) asked me why I wasn't taking courses towards ordination. I found this baffling. I have never felt a call to the ministry of word and sacrament, although I feel strongly called to a life in mission. I believe Christ calls us all to fulltime discipleship; He doesn't call us all to be ministers.

Other Matters

When Miss Mary Whale made her first speech in the assembly, a commissioner asked that it be noted that this was the first time in history that a lady elder had spoken in our general assembly. The mayor of Portage la Prairie, Rev. H. L. Henderson, commented: "It certainly won't be the last time."

Record July/August 1967

But those He does call—and I believe He calls both women and men—are now treated equally by the church. That was the great achievement of the 1966 Assembly.

Our church has been blessed with many fine ministers as a result of the 1966 decision

That decision also made it possible for me—and hundreds of women like me who are active in their congregations—to become ruling elders. As an elder, I try to follow the example of the elders (including a few women) whom we knew in Nigeria. In that church, ordaining someone as an elder is a mark of great respect, and elders take very seriously their role as spiritual leaders. We can learn from them.

Those who had opposed the decision to ordain women persisted in their belief that to do so was contrary to scripture and they led the liberty of conscience issue two decades later. They, as well as some younger ministers who hadn't been part of the assembly debates of the 60s, said that they could not, in conscience, take part in the ordination of women. Since the ordination of ministers is done by the presbytery those who continued in their opposition regularly didn't show up when a woman was to be ordained. The question was whether ministers—who promise to obey the laws of the church in their ordination vows—could opt out in this particular instance on the basis of conscience.

After a big commission, and big assembly debates, in which several speakers said that forcing ministers to go against their conscience was forcing them out of the church, the decision was that the matter had been decided and everyone had to fall in line. A few people probably did leave. The problem with this kind of debate is that it does nothing for healing the divide between left and right.

I am glad that the issue of women's ordination is behind us and that the church made the decision it did. Now, of course, (even though the discussion is currently on the backburner), we agonize over another question of eligibility for ordination—that of openly gay or lesbian persons. There are some parallels between the two debates, although I would not want to push the comparison too far. But in both debates one side bases its argument on basic justice and upholding human rights, while the other responds that worldly standards are not relevant, for the church is governed by another, higher, set of standards based in scripture. One side maintains that what scripture says on the subject must be seen in the social context of the time. The other maintains that the Bible is God's truth for all time. Thank God both sides keep on talking to each other.

I know that these are issues of immense personal importance to many in our church. But my own concern is that we spend too much time on them and in the process let the church flounder and the cries of the world go unheeded. That is why I rejoice that the issue of women's ordination, at least, was resolved, and give thanks for the gifts ordained women have brought to the church.

Marjorie Ross has served the church in many capacities and is a former nominee for moderator.

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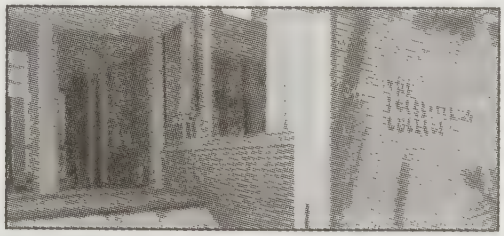
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Christ began and ended his prayers with 'Thy will be done'

BY DAVID WEBBER



"Those logging trucks are going to choke me to death," Linda said. "It has been so hot for so long that I don't think there is a drop of moisture anywhere. And the dust, not to mention the non-stop roar of trucks from 4:30 in the morning till dark. We need to move out of this campsite right now!"

"Aww hon," I said, "we just got here. This is the beginning of our holidays and this is our favourite fishing lake. Besides, I don't know if I have any energy left to move. Why don't you just pray for rain to control the dust?"

That night I know that's exactly what Linda did and I know she did it fervently too, for she has a history of both serious asthma and zealous prayer. The next morning at 4:30 we awoke to the roar of logging trucks and billowing clouds of dust. By the afternoon it started to sprinkle rain. Linda smiled and prayed for more. That night it rained pussies and pooches. The following morning we awoke to dead quiet from the road and the gentle sound of rain on the RV roof. It rained all day.

After a week and a half of solid rain, Linda and I were lying in bed one morning listening to the rain on our roof and CBC radio. There was nothing else to listen to for all the logging was shut down in the area and all the other campers had left due to the non-stop rain. Raven Lake was deserted except for us. The dirt road out of the bush was a sea of mud, impassable for truck-loggers and trailer-towers alike. The radio announced that after the recent torrential downpours, Central B.C. was experiencing serious flooding and road washouts. Even the highway between Prince George and McBride was washed out and the bridge into Wells Grey Park was gone. Campers and residents alike were stranded in the bush. I looked across my coffee cup to Linda on the other side of the bed and said, "Well hon, I think this time ya just might have over done it a tad."

Linda looked back at me and chuckled, "Ya think? Next time we come out here and it's hot and dusty I sure won't pray for rain."

I laughed at her statement. We battened down the hatches and enjoyed another week of rain and quiet. Since the rain slowed down my fly-fishing a bit, I had plenty of time for contemplation. What I naturally got to thinking about was prayer. What Linda had said in jest, naturally moved me to think about what

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Whose prayer is going to make the weather happen, the rancher who prays the hardest or the one who has the most faith or the one who is the most righteous?

Tennyson had said in earnest: "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of."

Tennyson's saying has probably influenced Christian attitude towards prayer more than everything the Bible says about it. It has fashioned in us an attitude that prayer makes things happen. It is an attitude that I heard continually from my Christian Science grandma in my childhood. And so this is exactly what I began to meditate on: Does prayer make things happen? As usual, for me, the lens through which I tend to look at stuff, both spiritual and temporal, is nature and Scripture.

As I thought about it, the example of praying for weather is a good one to examine when thinking through the hypothesis of prayer making things happen. It conjures up the image of one rancher with his hay cut, praying for the sun to cure it and another rancher down the road who has just got his field seeded, praying for rain to water it. Whose prayer is going to make the weather happen, the rancher who prays the hardest or the one who has the most faith or the one who is the most righteous? "God causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous." (Mt.5:45) It would appear that praying for weather, at least, is not going to make it happen.

But what about other stuff? As I considered this I remembered Paul's instructions to his friends in Philippi. After repeatedly calling them to "rejoice in the Lord" at all times, Paul instructs them, "Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." (Ph.4:6) Influenced by the Tennyson quote, it would appear that what Paul is saying is, prayer makes things happen. But the word "supplication" is an interesting word here. The English word, and for that matter the original Greek word too, means to beg or to humbly plead. For me, this does not exactly invoke images of making things happen but rather the petitioning of the one who does make everything happen to consider your needs.

And I think that this is where Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane teaches me. Jesus fervently prays, to the point of sweating blood, for the cup of suffering to be lifted from him. And he prays this three times. Given that he is the one who has turned water into wine and raised the dead, I would expect that if anyone could pray and make things happen it would be him. Rather, he gets up off of his knees and goes to the cross with the words of relinquishment blazoned on his very being, "Thy will be done." It turns out that this is the way Jesus begins prayer (Mt.6:10) and ends it (Mt.26:42).

For me this is where it all ends up. What begins with me expressing my deepest need, ends with me relinquishing what I want, to what God wants. It seems to me that petitioning prayer is, in the final analysis, not about making things happen. Rather it is, within the context of pouring out my needs to God, seeking the will of God. Gladys, a lady of considerable years and abundant wisdom in one of our house churches, puts it this way, "Petitioning prayer is saying to God you are ready to receive what he has always planned to give you." Perhaps rather than Tennyson we need to be more influenced by George Müller who relied totally on God and prayed continually for his provision. Müller said that for him the most important part of petitioning prayer was the 15 minutes of silence after he had said "Amen".

Author's Note: MÜLLER, GEORGE (1805–1898) A Leader in the Plymouth Brethren Movement in England. *He became the founder of Christian orphanages around the world based upon the principle that by faith and prayer alone the "Father to the fatherless" (Ps.68:5) still provided for his children.*

Rev. David Webber is a contributing editor to the *Record*. He is a minister of the Cariboo, B.C. house church ministry. His most recent book is *Like a Winter's Aspen: Embracing the Creator's Fire.*

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CLOAKEY, Ivy L., faithful member and elder of Knox Presbyterian Church, Belgrave, Ont. passed away on May 18, 2006. A faithful member of the WMS and her quiet care and compassion will be much missed.

HENDERSON, J. Allister, aged 78, passed away May 22, 2006, after serving faithfully for many years as elder, choir member, Board of Managers and Caretaker at St. David's Presbyterian Church, Toney River, N.S.

JAMES, Carolyn, died peacefully on May 3, 2006, in Peterborough, Ont. Beloved wife of George; mother of Margaret and of Douglas and his wife Jacqueline; grandmother of Lucas and Victoria; sister of Elaine. Carolyn was a gentle, energetic and intelligent woman who served St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Peterborough, with great commitment and distinction as church secretary, elder, session clerk and as a volunteer with the Community Kitchen, Bible Times Village and Bethlehem Live. Well done, good and faithful servant.

SMITH, Olwen, passed away peacefully on May 7 at the age of 98 at the home of her son John of Warsaw, Ont., surrounded by family. In earlier years, Olwen served as a helpful partner to her husband Rev. Neil Gregor Smith as they worked in parishes in St. Boniface, Man. and Corunna, Rodney, Lochwinnoch and Kirkfield in Ontario. Through Neil's years at Knox and Presbyterian Colleges, they befriended many theological students. Olwen was a long time member of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Peterborough, Ont. She is lovingly remembered by her three children, 11 grandchildren and 20 great grandchildren.

RUSSELL, Harold F., B. Com., B. Ed., aged 76 of Pictou, N.S. Elder and faithful member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church passed away on June 1, 2006. Beloved husband to Doretta, Harold was active as a member of the Session, Board of Managers, church treasurer, choir and mid-week groups. Harold was also active in the community as a teacher, businessman and in community groups: Kinsman, Rotary and the Pictou Men's Choir. He loved life and his family with a passion; children James, Max, Mona, Hilda Ann and Margo, his grandchildren, church, garden, dogs, horses, and sports. Often to be found at the wharf overseeing the commerce of life, Harold was a good man and we will miss his keen mind, his love of life and his treasured company on the journey.

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Simple words can encourage or discourage

The power of talk can affirm the positive or dwell on the negative

One September I spoke at a golf tournament, so as always, I invited someone along. That someone was Jeffrey, my grinning 12-year-old, blessed with an infectious laugh, but little interest in the game of golf. Golf is boring, he thinks. Discouraging. He would rather eat cabbage ice cream. "We'll throw in your brother's clubs," I told him, "but you don't have to golf. You can drive the cart and laugh at my shots." He seemed okay with that. After all, a trip with dad spells restaurants and hotels and waterslides to a boy his age. He can tolerate a game of golf for such rewards.

Upon arriving, we were introduced to the other members of our foursome, Jim and Neil, two of the kindest guys I've ever met. When they discovered Jeffrey's intentions, they were disappointed. "Golf with us," pleaded Jim, bowing on one knee and extending a hand, "we need you." "I'll buy you a pop and hamburger for lunch," promised Neil. Perhaps it was the hamburger that beckoned louder than the golf course, but soon Jeffrey found himself on the first tee, addressing the ball and surprising us all with a straight shot about 100 yards down the fairway.

"Tiger!" said Jim. "You swing just like Tiger Woods!"

Jeffrey was grinning.

The tournament was a best ball format. From the first tee, my ball sailed 200 yards but found a bunker. Jim and Neil were less fortunate. Guess whose ball we used? You're right. It was Tiger's.

Together the four of us managed to finish just under par that day, but Tiger doesn't remember the score. He remembers two middle-aged guys who were his biggest fans for 18 holes. "That's okay," they'd say, when he duffed one. "Here, hit mine." And when the ball skimmed the grass, causing squirrels to scatter, they'd pat him on the back and say, "You're somethin' Tiger!"



'Reckless words pierce like a sword' – PROVERBS 12:18

Nearing home the next day, we passed the Three Hills Golf Club two miles west of town. "Dad," said Jeffrey, "let's go golfing." And a smile tugged at my face. Thanks to Jim and Neil, it was the first time in his life the boy had spoken those words.

The tongue can pack a wallop, can't it? A well-placed word can restore confidence, give purpose and renew hope. It can uplift, nourish and mend. Proverbs 16:24 says, "Kind words are like honey—sweet to the soul and healthy for the body." But our words also have the power to devastate. A few inconsiderate ones can cripple the spirit of a child, a spouse or a friend. Proverbs 12:18 states "reckless words pierce like a sword."

If you're old like me, you may remember Karen Carpenter, part of the sibling duo, The Carpenters. They had more hits in the '70s than baseball player Pete Rose. Karen died unexpectedly of heart failure at age 32 after a long struggle with anorexia nervosa. *USA Today* reported that Karen's fatal obsession with weight control began when she read a reviewer's simple comment. He dubbed her "Richard's chubby sister."

Yes, there is a time for speaking up and confronting. Such words when mixed with love can help us grow. But far more often our words need to be like those of my new friends Jim and Neil, reflecting God's love for us.

Every conversation is an opportunity. A chance to encourage or discourage, affirm the positive or dwell on the negative, celebrate victories or rehash failures, draw people to Christ or push them away. Neil and Jim may never know the impact they had on my son by choosing the former. You may never know the eternal impact you make when you choose your words prayerfully and carefully.

Diamonds aren't forever, but a few choice words may be. Just ask my son, Tiger.

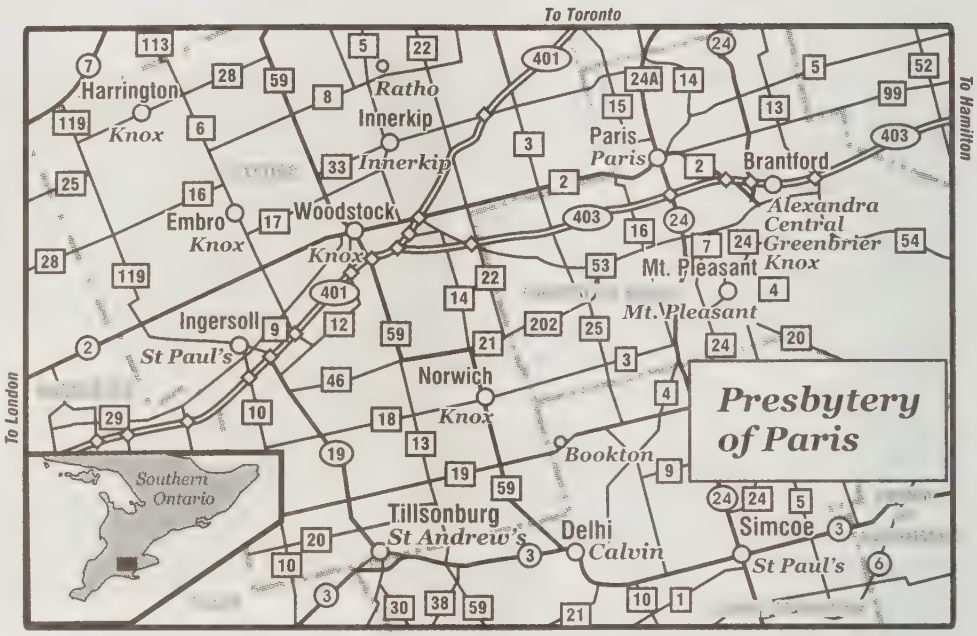
When he isn't golfing with his kids, Phil Callaway writes books and speaks to churches, conferences and corporations. His latest book *Golfing With the Master* (Harvest House) is available at www.philcallaway.com

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Small presbytery big on ideas

Paris sees 'growth in true participation'

BY AMY MACLACHLAN



Paris is a peculiar presbytery. Situated in south-western Ontario, its demographics, in many ways, reflect presbyteries across the country: several larger churches working alongside a greater number of rural and small-town congregations. But in other ways, the presbytery is quite different. While its attendance and members both dropped between 2003 and 2004, its number of adherents increased. It also has several congregations whose numbers reflect a growing trend in many denominations; that of more adherents than members. Paris Presbyterian and Calvin, Delhi, are examples of this, and Innerkip actually has more in attendance each week than is listed on the constituent roll.

Rev. Lonnie Atkinson, minister at St. Paul's, Ingersoll, understands this trend. "The tribalism of denominationalism is ending. We see that in the growth of non-denominational churches," he said. "We don't push membership, and yet there's growth in true participation. We offer sanctuary and hospitality and ask you to become part of the family. And if it's somewhere you feel at home, and where your heart is content, than we'll welcome you to membership with open arms."

Atkinson's strategy seems to be working. Since joining St. Paul's about 16 years ago, membership has grown from about 270 members to its current 380. About 300 people, including children, are in church each Sunday. Emphasis is on community and reaching out to the "un-churched."

The challenge, he said, is to move from simple hospitality to discipling—strengthening the faith of newcomers and their connection to the church. With a congregation like St. Paul's, however, the shift doesn't seem too daunting. "They've been willing to be innovative and creative," said Atkinson. He noted numerous ambitious projects including an addition and contemporary sanctuary renovation, a community camp outreach, a parish nurse, one of the first congregations in Canada to offer the workshop rotation model of Sunday school, writing their own Sunday school curriculum, and a stellar concert series begun 16 years ago.

Thanks to such initiatives, St. Paul's has become "10 years younger" in the last six years. They're currently developing a spirit centre where clergy and other professionals can come to learn, relax and rejuvenate. Various guest speakers from across the country come to these special events (there were four scheduled this year), and participants travel from all over Ontario for the spiritual renewal they find there.

"Ministry here is joyful," said Atkinson. "The congregation is always willing to risk for the gospel and to try new ways of being faithful to God."

Paris Presbytery's 14 charges cover 17 congregations; a small presbytery that offers intimacy to its members. St. Paul's, Ingersoll, has the most members, Innerkip the highest attendance, and Paris the most adherents.

Tracing its roots to 1836, the Paris congregation is heavily involved in youth and small groups and tailoring its outreach initiatives to life stages. The congregation offers women's bible study groups, men's groups, youth groups, Meals on Wheels, DivorceCare (a support and recovery group for people going through divorce), a weekly congregational discussion group, single parent potluck lunches, community meals, and a twice-yearly trek to Evangel Hall to host a meal. Paris' long-time minister, Rev. Stanley Cox, retired in July, and the congregation is beginning to start the search process.

Including Cox' retirement and that of Rev. John Cruickshank from St. Paul's, Simcoe, the presbytery has five vacancies, although two are being filled by supply ministers. The strain of few ministers is heightened in a small presbytery, where there is already too much work for the number of people available to do it.

Cruickshank, who retired from Simcoe after more than 17 years there, said although being small can be challenging, the same situation fosters a deep sense of commitment, as "those

MAP: HJ MCCLEMENS

who are involved have to be really involved. There's no extra manpower to spread the work around. Everyone has to carry their own weight."

Under Cruickshank's guidance, St Paul's (1792) has taken on three major building projects, including a complete restoration of the sanctuary and a $1.1-million addition finished in early 2005. One of their largest undertakings, however, is St. Paul's Court—a 30-unit apartment complex for senior citizens built in 1990 and attached to the church.

Innerkip Presbyterian is a congregation with more people attending on Sunday than are on the roll. Established around 1852, the congregation is filled with new ideas. "We've done things differently," said Rev. Chris Little, who has been at Innerkip for 15 years. "We began moving towards contemporary worship about 12 years ago, and the presbytery has always been open, supportive and excited."

Changes have included singing contemporary songs, moving from a choir to a worship team, using a band instead of an organ, and adding drama on various occasions. Little has stopped wearing robes and a tie. "We preach the gospel in a relevant way, and that includes our vocabulary, our dress and our worship style. We're addressing people's needs and meeting those needs with love and grace," he said.

Today, Innerkip offers two Sunday services for its 325 parishioners. Eighteen small groups meet in various homes and about 100 children are in Sunday school. To accommodate the growth, the congregation moved into a new 28,000 square foot building in August. Built on 10 acres, the sanctuary accommodates 525 people. "God is really at work among us," said Little. "We're taking Christ beyond ourselves, and people have been touched."

Central, Brantford, was established in 1925 by the dissenting members of the three Presbyterian congregations in that town. Today, it is one of four Presbyterian churches in Brantford, and Central's youth group meets with the youth from the Alexandra and Greenbrier congregations.

Central is involved in several ministries including women's and men's clubs, an annual picnic and bazaar, mystery dinners, a pastoral care team, transportation to worship services, and cooperation with the Salvation Army which hosts community meals at the nearby United Church.

Mount Pleasant (1841) is currently linked with Knox, Brantford. Mount Pleasant prides itself on its strong sense of family and community fostered by potluck dinners, corn roasts, coffee hours, picnics, concerts and euchre nights. The church also has a social action-minded college and careers group that raises funds for students in Ghana, to support initiatives of Presbyterian World Service & Development and to support the congregation's Sunday school.

Ken Smith, presbytery clerk and member at St. Paul's, Simcoe, since 1960, describes his presbytery as "collegial, sincerely prayerful, diligent and responsive." This inviting atmosphere persists even in times of difficulty. Although the presbytery has numerous small and struggling congregations, Smith said the presbytery remains dedicated to letting them continue if possible. "I don't think my presbytery would ever encourage a church to close. We do our best to look after their needs and to provide what they require."

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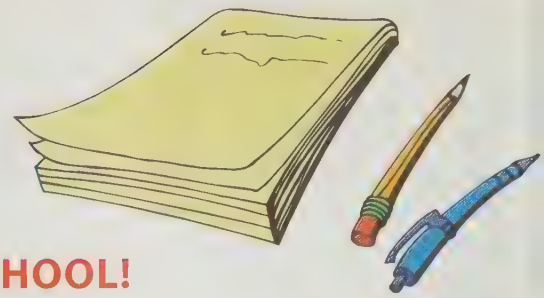
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Not sure? Unscramble the following words to see if you're right:

Eht ibbel



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- *Find out how a strong man lost his hair!*
- *Learn about how a boy became a King!*
- *Discover the amazing miracles of Jesus Christ!*

Bible Game – Sword Drills

You'll need: Two players, two Bibles, one caller (an adult)

The caller will call out one of the scriptures below. Race against the other player to see who can find it first. The person who finds the most first wins. Plus, you will learn something about God's amazing love while playing!

John 3:16

Luke 18:27

Philippians 4:13

2 Corinthians 9:8

Romans 8:28

Hebrews 13:5

1 Corinthians 1:30

1 Peter 5:7

2 Timothy 1:7

1 John 1:9



To report a vacancy for the next issue of the Record please contact: Deborah Leader
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All notices of pulpit vacancies will be charged to the congregation: $8 a line, $40 minimum for a one-time insertion or $25 per insertion for four or more insertions.

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Oshawa, St. Luke's; Rev. Dennis Cook, 97 Burcher Rd., Ajax, ON L1S 2R3; dencook@rogers.com.

Penetanguishene, First; Rev. Peter Ruddell, Box A-180, RR 1, Coldwater, ON L0K 1E0; 705-686-3125; panddruddell@rogers.com.

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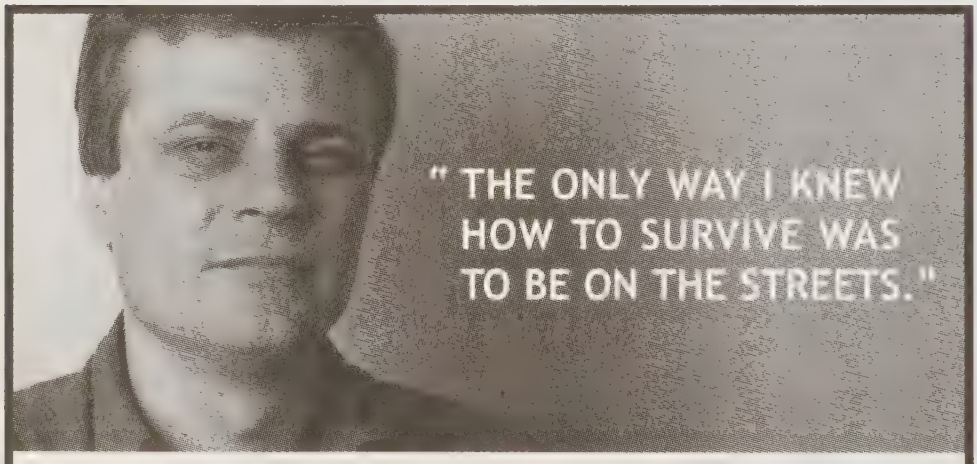
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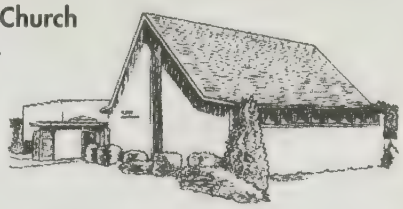
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Gifts according to grace

Reflecting on the importance of the role given to a lay worker in the church

My first months as moderator have given me some time to reflect on the honour bestowed on me and the importance of this role. I am thankful to friends, both old and new, who have sent their best wishes and their kind words of wisdom and encouragement. I have received invitations to visit synods, presbyteries and congregations. It is my desire to honour most of these if at all possible. However, I cannot be in more than one place at a time so in some cases will try to suggest an alternate date. I want to have the opportunity to visit congregations in our church and to learn what is happening in your area.

The scripture passage from Paul's letter, Romans 12, is one that I have pondered as I have taken on my new responsibilities as moderator. Prior to my election, this has been a role that was only bestowed upon professional church workers. I realize that my gifts are different but my calling is the same. I believe that God has called me to this responsibility as God did during my 42 years working for the church both at home and overseas.

I was beginning to think that Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont., was my new home having been there for almost a week during General Assembly and exactly one month later I was there again for Canada Youth '06. The events were a very interesting contrast, different kinds of energy, from the serious business meetings of the national church, to the flashing lights and the busy activity of our youth. The business of the church is vital to our ministry and the youth are part of it. In my six days at CY06 with over 600 participants, I had the opportunity to listen to the youth and their leaders. They are excited about their faith and worship was number one on their poll. Many even admitted that they liked the old hymns, perhaps sung a little faster than some of us experience.

My schedule will take me to India from September 15 to October 6. During my time in India we will have an opportunity to celebrate the release and acquittal of the 15 prisoners on the Bhil field. They are waiting the arrival of Ron Wallace and me to celebrate with all the villages in the area, to give thanks to God. They want to express through us their thanks and appreciation for the prayers and support of the members of our church. These men are an example to us; despite their difficult times and incarceration for almost two and a half years, they are giving thanks to God. They believe that God has a plan for them and that something good will come out of all of this. I look forward to reporting to the church on my time with them.

The Women's Missionary Society, of which I am the national treasurer, has made it possible for the Jobat Christian School in India to be rebuilt due to its unsafe structure. The new school will be renamed The Mabel Booth Memorial Christian School, honouring one of our own diaconal ministers who gave her life to the work and the leading of children, and the training of leaders, both in congregational work and as the Children's Work Secretary for the WMS. When Mabel was a deaconess at Glenview, Toronto, she wisely counselled the Ewart College students during their field work. The WMS wanted to honour her for her contribution to the work of children within our church and requested that a plaque be put on the new building dedicating it to the glory of God and in memory of Mabel Booth.

The school board, in Jobat, India, itself decided to rename the school rather than only putting up a plaque. Because of the additional classrooms, the government has permitted the school to add at least two and possibly three higher grades. Education is key in the developing world. The school is a fine example of Christian witness in an area where the Christians have suffered persecution. Pauline Brown continues to assist the Christians in the Bhil field with her wise counsel.

M. Wilma Welsh

Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us exercise them: if prophecy, in proportion to the faith; if ministry, in ministering; if one is a teacher, in teaching; if one exhorts, in exhortation; if one contributes, in generosity; if one is over others, with diligence; if one does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be sincere; hate what is evil, hold on to what is good; love one another with mutual affection.

Romans 12: 6-9



A different sort of business meeting on the Brock University campus in St. Catharines, Ont., as Canada Youth participants find the melody and the beat.

2006 CHRISTMAS ART CONTEST



Courtesy of Cassidy, age 7.

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PRESBYTERIAN Record

October 2006



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Happy Thanksgiving!



Cassidy O'Kopniak (centre) asked that presents for her sixth birthday be given as donations for the Malawi project at her church, Unionville, Ont. She raised $290, which went towards the $8,100 raised, exceeding the goal of $5,000 needed to build a well in a Malawi village. Cassidy reflects a rare spirit of Thanksgiving, inspired by Presbyterian World Service and Development's Towards A World Without AIDS. To read her minister's—Rev. Gordon Timber—account of the church's transformed sense of mission, please see our website.

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OCTOBER 2006

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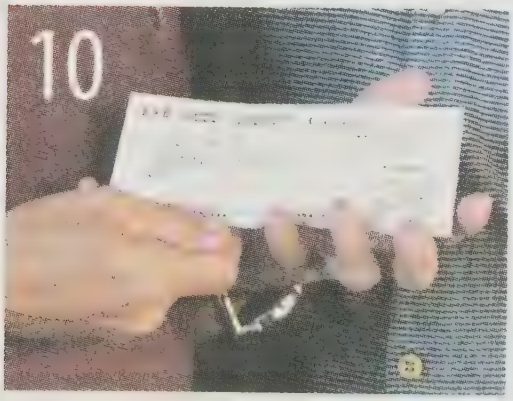
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COVER FEATURE

20 XVI World AIDS Conference

Our faith demands more
by Andrew Faiz



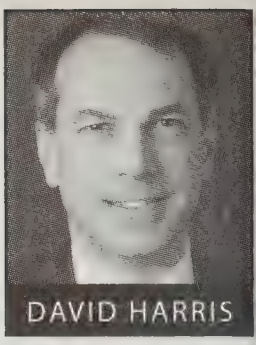
FEATURE

18 China mission

A joyful response
by Don Macleod



On the cover: Delegates at the faith-based AIDS conference hold a rally at Toronto's City Hall.



Men, cease your childish ways

At the recent international AIDS conference held in Toronto, speaker after speaker pointed out that AIDS need not be nearly so widespread and destructive as it is. • Why then is AIDS so widespread and spreading? • The answer you get depends on who you ask, as Andrew Faiz's in-depth report in this issue reveals. Some people blame poverty, some politics. Some point fingers at homosexuals, others at prostitutes and intravenous drug users.

Some blame George W. Bush, some blame popes and other church leaders. Some blame capitalism and international pharmaceutical firms. Others blame Western social liberalism.

From a Christian perspective, broken humanity has a hand in almost every aspect of this disease, including, most glaringly, the economic injustice of extreme poverty.

But if Christians see moral issues in this crisis (and, in itself, this is not wrong), they too often jump to simplistic solutions that involve sin and retribution.

First, not everyone, Christians included, shares these moral values. And if they don't, nothing is solved. Coming to understand that unprotected sex with multiple partners is risky and dangerous to self and others is another matter. (As an aside, most sexual transmission is heterosexual.)

Moreover, the way we treat sexual sins is at odds with how we treat almost every other sin—the attitude of too many people of faith regarding sexuality is that if you're not perfect (chaste within marriage), you get your just desserts.

But besides being doubtful theology, we don't think that way on almost any other topic. No one, for instance, would say a jaywalking person "deserves" to be hit and killed. We don't say poor people "deserve" to go hungry or without medical care. In any case, there isn't an honest person alive who could confess to never having had an "improper" sexual thought, regardless their moral standpoint. So why do the rules appear different for sexual sins and especially HIV?

One of the tests of human maturity is the ability to deal with complex ethical issues that involve competing values. A common test is to ask a child whether it is all right for an impoverished starving person to take food from a store without paying. A child of eight or nine will probably say that stealing is wrong, full stop.

By the time a child reaches 12 or so, however, the issue of poverty and starvation come into play as mitigating factors. It's a sign of maturity to see the complexity of the problems involved: how did the person come to be impoverished and starving? Are there other unexpressed underlying issues? And so on.

Why do we abandon this thinking when it comes to religion where all too easily pigeon-holes framed by inflexible rules for living appear? "There's right and there's wrong, just as we were taught as children," people will say.

> *When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I felt as a child: but when I became a man, I ceased those childish ways.*

Unquestionably, AIDS has a sexual side and it's folly to ignore that. But to extrapolate that it's God's punishment or that we should not help people because they got what they "deserved" is appalling: It supposes, among other things that we know God's mind and will for individuals.

But if the spread of AIDS is caused by many factors, there is a troubling underlying cause. What links all of the subjects for blame listed above is abuse of power and position.

The sexual side of AIDS is not about homosexuality, it's about male sexuality. Beyond sexuality, it is about male economic and political power and oppression of women.

In India and Africa, it has been evident for years that the spread of the virus follows the trucking routes, where men, married or not, regularly have unprotected sex. Throughout much of sub-Sahara Africa, many men openly subscribe to their right to have sex when and where they want it.

Over the millennia, men have created many cultures, philosophies and religions to support maintaining the upper hand. If Christians are to root out AIDS, males need to put away their childish ways and needs and work with women to establish God's justice for everyone.

It's time for all of us to grow up.

David Harris

letters

Emerging lands

Stuart MacDonald is correct that the institutional church is facing a monumental change owing to the fact that our close bonds with the central establishments of Western society have been cut after a period of 1,700 years. By all means pray, but when we look at our church and the reality that we have failed to connect with generations born in the past 65 years, we should realize that we have been getting deeper in the wilderness for some time. If insight and direction do not come soon we will die in the wilderness.

If the *Record* cannot find a Presbyterian thinker with some insight and some vision for a new direction, an article or series with some detail and depth on the ideas of Borg or other figures in the emerging church movement would be appreciated.

Our understanding and concept of faith will also change and evolve as it is freed from 1,700 years of institutional and societal entanglements. There is something fresh, fertile and exciting beyond the wilderness. Will Presbyterians reach the Promised Land?

Andrew Mitchell
North Saanich, B.C.

Doing the right thing

Thank you for your closing statement in the July/August edition of the *Record*. We as a society have selected to remember the one bad thing someone does, not the many good things.

Much has been said about Dr. Robert Fourney waiving his right to a church trial. I am sure he researched the cost involved in an appeal. After having spent thousands of dollars preparing a defense for a trial that never occurred, he would now face another year of stress and excessive dollars to defend himself. I believe Dr. Fourney looked at the stress and additional cost that Glenview, Toronto, had undergone during his suspension and decided that another year or so was not fair to them.

In today's society if someone answers the media with "no comment" or chooses to not appeal, we say he's guilty. Consider the cost and the stress and the fact that once accused you can never clear your name to 100 per cent of the people.

You state that neither a wrongful dismissal suit nor slander suits against the complainants has been filed. I would suggest that Fourney is the type of minister who does not want to put people in jeopardy. They have not publicly accused him and he wants to protect their privacy despite the fact he has been publicly destroyed.

What is the bottom line? Continued stress, exorbitant legal costs, the impossible task of clearing one's name. You did the right thing Dr. Fourney; you retired and will now get on with your life serving our Lord in another way that He has chosen.

Gerald Head
Windsor, Ont.

I know there will be great diversity of opinion regarding the reporting on the presbytery decision regarding Dr. Robert Fourney. Perhaps that will evidence itself nowhere more dramatically than in the responses to your editorial for the July/August edition. I would personally like to express a series of words that I feel characterize the nature of your editorial. Courageous—as difficult as it is to make commentary in these situations I believe you spoke forthrightly and courageously. Critical—in a day and age when these types of issues are frequently swept under the proverbial carpet it was essential that someone speak clearly concerning the decision. Compassionate—appropriate recognition was given to the needs which Dr. Fourney as well as the congregations he has served will have going forward from here while at the same time acknowledging that the circle of those impacted adversely by all of this is much bigger than the victims them-

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selves. Conscientious—for I can only imagine how much consideration must have gone into the decision not only about what would be reported but how best to do that. Heartfelt thanks to you for doing the right thing.

Chuck Congram
Senior Minister,
Lakeshore St. Andrew's Church

A brief history of Thompson and WARC

Re William P. Thompson, July/August issue.

The movement towards the organization of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches began in 1875, the year in which The Presbyterian Church in Canada came into being. It was also the Centenary of the American Declaration of Independence, so that Americans did not attend a meeting in London, England. It was postponed until the following year, although delegates from Australia and New Zealand made the trip, so they sat around for 12 months until others from Canada, the United States and Reformed Churches in Western Europe could attend. So the founding General Council was in 1876.

William Thompson was the Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church (USA), the northern church, but when the churches reunited in 1983, James Andrews of the southern church was elected as Stated Clerk. The dislike that resulted came out at the General Council of 1989 in Seoul, when Dr. Thompson opposed the election of Andrews to the Executive Committee of the Alliance, on the grounds that he was an employee of the Alliance since he was secretary of CANAAC. Rather than argue the point, Andrews resigned as secretary and, since there were sufficient delegates present from CANAAC to form a quorum, his resignation was accepted and Dr. Margaethe Brown was elected in his stead.

Thompson was president of the Alliance in the 1970s, from the Nairobi General Council in 1970 until the Scotland General Council in 1977, when he was succeeded by Dr. James McCord. Dr. Allan Boesak was elected president at the Ottawa General Council in 1982, re-elected in Seoul in 1989, but resigned the following year, and his place was taken by Dr. Jane Dempsey Douglass, one of the vice-presidents.

Thompson was on General MacArthur's staff during the war in the Pacific, and was with him on the deck of the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay when Macarthur accepted the Japanese surrender.

John A. MacFarlane
(former Treasurer of CANAAC)
via email

Grieving timetable

As an enthusiastic supporter of the *Record*, I read the article entitled On Being A Widow by Gwyneth Whilsmith in May. I wrote the following on January 20, 2004:

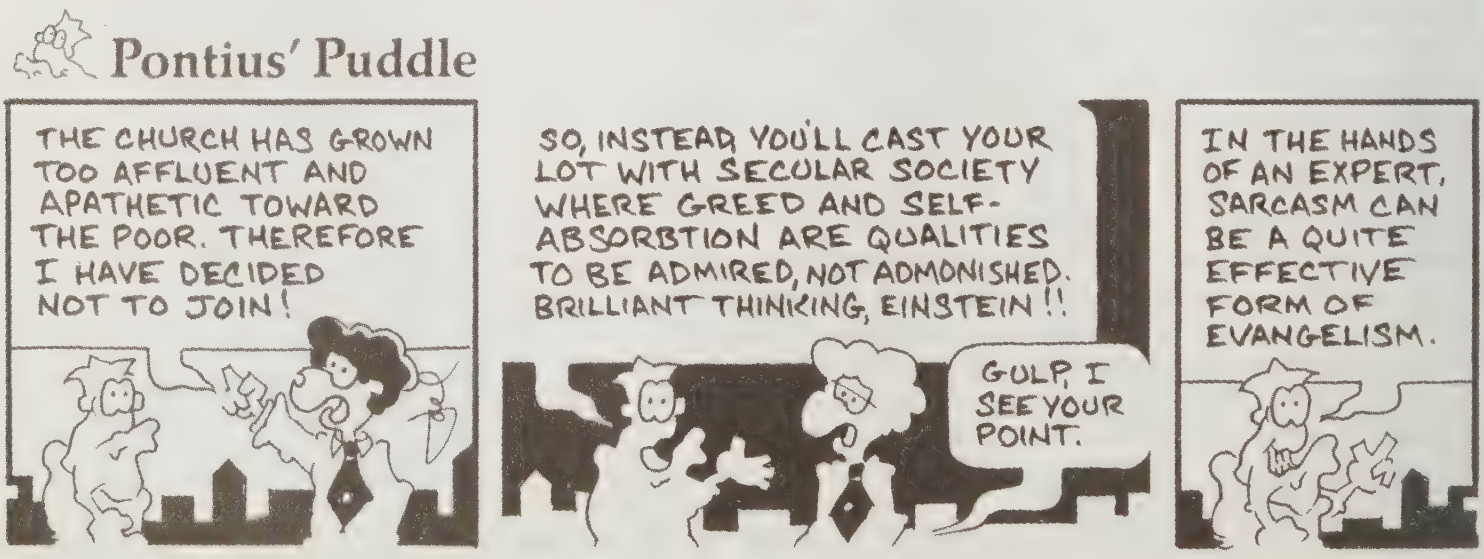
My wife of 39 years suffered two grand mal seizures in 2000. A brain tumor was detected that failed to respond to the conventional treatments. Her health progressively deteriorated but she chose to attend to her duties as church secretary at Knox, Burlington, until the day she died nine months later. Her death was a shock to all who knew her.

As I had nine months to prepare for this tragic loss, I made some key decisions that some have questioned. My minister suggested that everyone's timetable in the grieving process is different, but that it's important to get on with one's life. Only I would know the right time!

I learned quickly that my wife's friends were not my friends. My family, with some exceptions, disappeared after the funeral. I spent the following Christmas and New Year's in Scotland and Europe visiting family when I made several decisions that influenced my life.

In the fall of 2001, I was invited to have dinner only twice with a few friends and shared a meal in my home only once from September to December. Fortunately, I continued to work as a national sportscaster in Toronto, became Clerk of Session at Knox and remained active in several Masonic organizations. I derived support from my co-workers, my church and my immediate family. Some cousins maintained contact.

During the last several years of my marriage, I had become quite self-sufficient; and I never had any desire to sell my home and move elsewhere. As a sociable and gregarious type since 1956, I did not enjoy living alone as I missed the love, care and intimacy that marriage affords. After less than satisfying attempts to meet women my own age, I began to cultivate a relationship with a younger lady that my wife and I had known in a work and social situation for nearly four years. The relationship developed to a



point that we became formally engaged in front of 500 people at a nightclub in Buffalo. As an active person running 35 miles per week, my wife-to-be had to focus to keep pace with my lifestyle. The former social circle disappeared.

We married in 2003 at Knox. Our guest list included family and friends who supported us. We learned much from each other in the short span of quality time we spent together. We enjoyed church activities, weekend road trips, bike rides and rock concerts. I have been able to take advantage of senior citizen prices!

We move in directions that include new adventures, new family traditions and new friends and sometimes Happy Hour. We do whatever works for us. We have "shaken the dust off our feet" and moved on.

Charlie Lemmex
Burlington, Ont.

Spiritual ancestory

"The Bible is not a book of science," so says the Presbyterian Church (USA) in May.

Charles Darwin, Albert Einstein and Stephen W. Hawking would agree and add that an intelligent life force labelled as God created the universe.

Each of the six billion residents of Earth will experience spiritual hunger at some time in their lifetime. And many will find peace within by experiencing the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

There are numerous theories describing the origin of homo sapiens, none conclusive. I prefer to listen to scientific proof rather than anecdotal evidence. I also believe as each generation emerges, the debates will continue and new theories will be developed. Did we come from Adam or Apes? Who knows for sure?

Having scrutinized many theories of varying validity, I'm not sure where we came from physically, but I'm more concerned about where we are going spiritually.

J. Gordon Neal
Whitby, Ont.

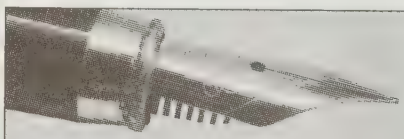
Correction

A headline in the September news section incorrectly said the Presbyterian Church USA had approved ordaining gays. The denomination voted to devolve more responsibility over ordination standards to presbyteries. This gives greater leeway in the ordination of homosexuals in a relationship. We apologize for the error.

The Record Appeals to You

The personalized envelope that came with your Record contains our annual appeal letter.

We appreciate your generous support!



The *Presbyterian Record* welcomes letters to the editor. Please include your name, home address and a daytime telephone number. We reserve the right to edit all letters for length and clarity.

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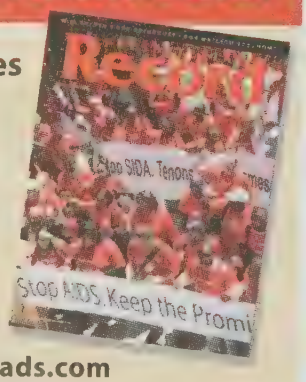
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people & places



They can recite Psalms 23 and 100, and the Apostle's Creed and the Ten Commandments and much more. And they can sing at least one worship song. And, they are always on their best behaviour. They are the Sunday School at Wexford, Toronto. In July they received their annual awards under the guidance of Rev. Mary Bowes and Marjorie Taffe. They are Joshua, Sydney, Elizabeth, Aidan, Tiffany, Timothy, Colin, Nathanial and Jordan. Jeremiah, the youngest member of the Sunday School at the age of five won the highest achievement award, The Covenant Trophy and Gold medal.

For more People & Places submissions please visit our website: www.presbyterianrecord.ca



Here's a curious solution to the sliding rolls in our church: triplets. Ministers Bev Longmire and Jim Ferrier participated in a unique baptismal ceremony last December at Elphin, Ont., as they baptized Gracyn, Alyssa and Nicholas Patterson and their cousin Alexandra Duncan. The fresh Presbyterians share Aileen Patterson as their great-grandmother. Pictured with the ministers and the triplets are the overwhelmed and excited Erica and Graham Patterson. For a photograph of Alexandra and her family please visit our website.

HAD CAKE LATELY? Share your celebrations with the rest of the church. Send your stories to PnP@presbyterianrecord.ca along with your digital photographs, 300 dpi minimum, high quality JPEGs. Or mail the photographs to: The Record, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, M3C 1J7.

To be considered for People and Places, photographs should be sharp and everyone clearly identified. The *Record* reserves the right to reject any photos not of sufficient quality. Photographs cannot be returned.



Working together, building in faith: In May the Daughters of St. Andrew's in Lindsay, Ont., had a joint birthday party for their octogenarian members. The group, founded in 1954, has an active membership of 32. Front row: Noreen Jamieson, Helen Lawrence, Reta Webster, Ruth Catton, Leila Black, Sheila Bebbington, Nan Burnside, Rosella Moore. Back row: Fay Bell, Alice Ferguson, Jeanne Dell, Evelyn McLean, Betty Densmore, Florence Manson. Fay, Helen and Evelyn are charter members. Be sure to check out the follow-up 10 years from now.



After an eight-month vacancy, Braeside Presbyterian in St. Albert, Alta., unanimously agreed to ask Rev. Connie Lee of Mississauga, Ont., to become their minister. In April, on Palm Sunday, she held her first service in her new church followed in the evening by her induction service. The congregation and the minister are looking forward to a long and spiritual time together.



They don't look 145 years old—but they are. They are the keepers of the flame at Argyle, Ont., the legacy that contains the history and the future of the congregation as it celebrates its 145th anniversary. Their minister writes, "I find it strange that over the years this congregation has never made use of sharing events in the Record. I am trying to change that. I hasten to say they do enjoy the magazine which I promote as the Link Between Congregations." Front: Annie-Isabel Tait who has been the organist for more than 50 years, her husband Duncan, a retired elder.
Back: Hugh Appèl, Minister at Crinan, Jane Appèl, Don McCallum, guest minister, Karen Carroll, Alan Carroll, Clerk.
For Appèl's history of Argyle, please see our website.

SPOTLIGHT



A cheque in the amount of $2,200,000 from the Canadian International Development Agency and made payable to Presbyterian World Service and Development was received in early July. PWS&D is administering the tsunami relief program in India which has brought together a joint effort of the Presbyterian, United, Mennonite and Anglican Churches. The happy PWS&D members are Alex Macdonald, Rev. Rick Fee, Karen Plater, John Popiel, Guy Smagghe and Colleen McCue.

New conservation resource available

SAFE WATER IS CRITICAL for survival. That's why *Water Partners: Safe Water for All* invites children and youth to "board a water craft" and zoom around the world visiting Tanzania, India, Indonesia, Nicaragua and the Cariboo Region of British Columbia. At each stop, the youth will discover how five of the Presbyterian Church's partner countries are ensuring safe water, and how the church is helping them. Through Bible lessons, personal stories, crafts, recipes, music and games, young people and their leaders will raise money for water projects and learn how they can participate in keeping water safe in their own community. A water challenge, given in calendar format, helps children learn how their daily actions impact water supply and what they can do to make a difference. Written by Anne Miller, the resource was mailed free of charge in the August PCPak but extra copies of the booklet (along with a DVD or VHS) can be purchased from the Book Room by calling 1-800-619-7301. – *Dorothy Henderson and AM*

Americans reconsider Korean synods

ON THE VERGE of recommending a synod of Korean-only presbyteries, the church polity committee of the Presbyterian Church (USA) had second thoughts. "Creating a separate synod based on ethnicity would open the door to Pandora's box," said Tres Adams III, a theological student advisory delegate from Pittsburgh Seminary.

There are more than 400 Korean Presbyterian congregations in the United States with another 100 expected to start within the next half decade. This rapid growth is in contrast to the steady decline of the PC(USA).

The committee sent a recommendation that the General Assembly office work with Korean leaders to bring proposals "that would strengthen the witness of Korean-language governing bodies and provide better means for their connection with other governing bodies in the wider mission of the church.' – *Presbyterian News Service*

Honouring a memory by helping Kenyan kids

A Toronto congregation is doing three good turns with one simple project. Don's Schoolhouse Project, created by Morningside High Park Presbyterian Church, is raising money to build a school in Kenya, helping farmers in developing countries earn a fair wage by promoting fair trade coffee, and honoring the memory of church regular Don Jennison, a former school principal and supporter of social justice who died in 2005. His famous question for people who had learned of an injustice was, "Well? What'cha gonna do about it?"

Morningside High Park did plenty. Between October 2005 and June 2006, thanks to donations, fundraisers and sales of fair trade coffee, tea and chocolate, more than $11,000 was raised. Nearly $10,000 of that will pay for the building of a schoolhouse in Kenya (complete with washroom) and a teacher's salary for a year. Remaining funds, as well as any more that are raised, will go towards school supplies or building a well for the village.

"It's been a real inspiration," said Claire Ross Dunn, another MHP regular and project organizer. She mentioned the creative ways the congregation has raised money, including penny-rolling, youth playing music on Toronto streets, and selling farm-fresh asparagus during Sunday coffee hour. "It's all very exciting."

The congregation works with Free the Children, the largest network of children helping children through education in the world, with more than one million youth involved in its education and development programs in 45 countries. Founded by child rights activist Craig Kielburger, Free the Children has partnerships with the United Nations and Oprah's Angel Network.

The congregation is so passionate about the issue that they developed a kit on how to start your own schoolhouse project with Free the Children. The foundation is currently in discussions to build a study guide around the kit for use in classrooms.

For a free how-to kit: 416-766-4765; e-mail: morningsidehighpark@bellnet.ca. The kit is available in pdf at *www.morningsidehighpark.com.*

Healing and reconciliation animator named

THE LIFE AND MISSION AGENCY has announced that Lori Ransom, an elder at St. Andrew's, King Street, Toronto, and member of the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation (Pembroke, Ont.) will be the church's first Healing and Reconciliation Program Animator.



Ransom spent more than 18 years with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, where she acted as a writer, editor and director responsible for communications. She is a trained facilitator and has developed and led numerous group processes and presentations. Her positions within the department have given her an extensive understanding of Aboriginal issues in Canada.

The one-year contract position began Sept. 5, and will be handled through Justice Ministries. Ransom will work to further the aims and objectives of the Healing and Reconciliation initiative of the church.

Same-sex issues stir Presbyterian churches

DECENTRALIZATION AND DEBATES surrounding the same-sex issue have left Presbyterians in the United States largely unaware of the denomination's national mission and development work, says the church's new head of national and international ministries.

Linda Bryant Valentine, executive director of the General Assembly Council, says the church is "embroiled in debates that can distract from our mission."

She also noted "individuals and congregations want to have more direct involvement in mission. There is less money for the national church and at the same time a flourishing of activity at the local level.

Valentine's comments come on the heels of a massive restructuring at the 2.5-million-member denomination's headquarters in Louisville, Kentucky. About 100 staff were laid off in May, including 40 overseas jobs, with more to leave this month. The cuts are expected to save about $5.2 million US annually on an overall budget of $113.9 million.

General Assembly Council recently endorsed Valentine's new leadership and organizational structure for the church's mission program. The new structure, expected to take effect January 1, will have six program directors overseeing worship, education and stewardship; evangelism, church growth and leadership; social justice and peacemaking; relief and development; mission partnerships and women's and racial ethnic ministries.

The Church of Scotland is facing what some are calling "its biggest crisis for more than a century" after pro-gay ministers set up a campaign group to lobby for the rights of homosexual clergy. According to Scotsman.com, a group calling themselves Affirmation Scotland wants to lift what it claims is the "climate of fear" and intimidation surrounding homosexuality.

The issue of gay marriage was raised at the May General Assembly, where 322 commissioners voted to allow ministers to "conduct a service marking a civil partnership" (with 314 voting against it). However, the final decision has been sent to presbyteries under the Barrier Act, with traditionalists hoping that the grassroots of the church will have a less forgiving view of homosexuality than the assembly.

"I think there are people who see the church as being closed," said Rev. Kim Cran, one of the founders of Affirmation Scotland. "I want to see an open church. – *with files from Presbyterian News Service and Scotland on Sunday and The Sunday Times*



With small loans Maheja (left) has opened a dressmaking shop, fast food service and auto small parts salvage.

PHOTO: CAIXA

Small loans, big hope

In poverty-stricken Mozambique, Maheja never imagined that one day she, a poor, illiterate woman, might be the owner of three small businesses. But the *Caixa das Mulheres de Nampula* changed that. The *Caixa* is a savings and credit union for the low-income women of Nampula Mozambique supported by PWS&D. The *Caixa* provides training and small loans to help women start their own businesses. With a number of loans, ranging from $100 to $1000, and with her husband's help, Maheja has opened a dressmaking shop, a mobile fast food service and a small auto parts salvage business. She now has 13 employees and has been able to pay university tuition for two of her children. Maheja herself is now also learning how to read and write. This is a dream come true. Without *Caixa*'s support, she and her family would have remained mired in poverty that is common for 70% of the women who are illiterate.

Run by women, for women, the *Caixa* has been recognized as one of the most promising micro-finance institutions in Mozambique. In the past two years the repayment of loans has been higher than 98%!

Fight Poverty. Support PWS&D.

PWS&D's relief and development programs operate because people and congregations financially support the work. Grants from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) help your donation go a long way. PWS&D receives no funds from Presbyterians Sharing...

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Ending violence against children

A DECLARATION CALLING FOR "action by all African governments and other stakeholders to take immediate steps to end all forms of violence against children" was signed by the delegates of an international children's rights conference in Ethiopia in May.

The conference, which attracted 400 participants from 25 countries, was held at the United Nations Conference Centre in Addis Ababa and was organized by The African Child Policy Forum, an independent, pan-African advocacy group working for children's rights. Participants spoke about violence against children, and especially girls, in Africa.

It featured the voices of women activists, policy makers, government leaders, youth and human rights groups, and complements an ongoing UN initiative to study violence against children.

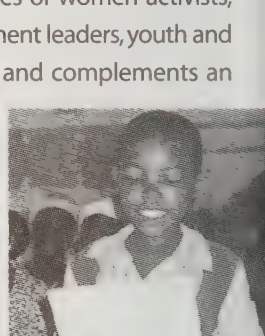


PHOTO COURTESY GCN

'If you educate a girl, you educate a nation'

"The situation of African girls is especially critical as a result of discriminatory and patriarchal practices, inequality, exclusion, inadequate legal protection, lack of educational opportunities, the disproportionate impact HIV and AIDS has on them, as well as the persistence of poverty," stated the participants. "Failure to address these situations constitutes not only a grave violation of human rights, but threatens the very fabric of society."

The declaration will be submitted to the 61st session of the UN General Assembly later this year and used as a vehicle for campaigning with African governments to develop effective policies and programs against violence against girls.

According to the World Health Organization, as many as 40 million children under the age of 15 are victims of violence every year.

–with files from The African Child Policy Forum

Settlement process hits a bump

2,500 residential school cases to be settled annually

Resolving complaints from former students of Indian residential schools is getting trickier as time goes on. The federal government has been sending out $8,000 compensation cheques to former students over the age of 65, but has rejected numerous claimants, saying there isn't any proof they attended a residential school. To make matters worse, the first of nine provincial court hearings, held in Toronto at the end of August and required to okay the federally-approved Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, criticized the process.

As reported in the *Anglican Journal*, Justice Warren Winkler, who has handled class action suits regarding the Walkerton E. coli disaster and the Red Cross' hepatitis C-tainted blood scandal, questioned whether there are enough human and financial resources to handle the caseload. Based on his past experiences, he said it is unrealistic to think that many of the cases will "be cleaned up in one day."

"These are serious practical questions," he said. "I know what works and what doesn't … I have to be satisfied that you can deliver on your promises. You have to show me that resources can match the demand. You want people to take these cases seriously. If there are complaints, they'll come back to me. Who will hear the appeals?"

Government lawyers said the agreement assumes 2,500 cases will be heard every year in the Independent Assessment Process, which hears cases involving serious claims of physical and sexual abuse. There are currently 10,000 cases involving physical and sexual abuse in courts across Canada and 5,000 in the Alternative Dispute Resolution process. It is estimated that it will take about six to eight years to finish the compensation process entirely.

In July, a roundtable group discussed the government's rejection to provide a common experience payment to some former students and the lack of an appeal process to remedy the situation. Rev. Stephen Kendall, principal clerk of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, said although he was unable to attend the roundtable meeting, he is aware of the situation.

"We know about it, we share the concern and understand it's a difficult issue," Kendall told the *Record*. "We understand that it is being addressed by the government and the courts as the overall settlement agreement proceeds to certification."

He said churches may have a role to play in remedying the situation, but it is too early to say exactly how.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is responsible for claims related to two former residential schools—Cecilia Jeffrey in Kenora, Ont., and Birtle in Manitoba. The church has a total of 246 cases consisting of physical or physical and sexual abuse. The church has already paid more than $540,000 for 30 of those claims.

The federal government approved a $1.9-billion settlement package in May that provides a common experience payment to all former students of Indian residential schools. Each student is to receive $10,000, plus $3,000 for every year of attendance. Separate compensation for cases of serious physical and sexual abuse will still be given. Former students over the age of 65 began receiving advance payment of $8,000 in June. The government package also includes funding for healing and commemoration programs and a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, a joint endeavour of churches and government.

The official court website—www.residentialschoolsettlement.ca—has information on the settlement process. Directed at former students and their families it lists dates for those who might want to participate in the hearings. – *AM with files from the Anglican Journal*

Lutheran synod approves same-sex blessings

DELEGATES OF THE Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada's Eastern Synod voted July 6 to allow individual congregations to decide whether same-sex unions may be blessed in their parishes.

However, a cloud of uncertainty remains as to whether the synod has jurisdiction over the matter or whether it resides with the national convention, which last year defeated a similar motion to allow the blessing of same-sex unions. The ELCIC's National Church Council was expected to decide on the matter when it met in September. (There was no decision as of press time). ELCIC national bishop Raymond Schultz also planned on making his own recommendation during that meeting.

Michael Pryse, the bishop of the Eastern synod (which covers Ontario to the Maritimes), has stated that if the National Church Council decides to put the issue to the church's court of adjudication, he would ask pastors to refrain from blessing same-gender unions until clarity is achieved.

The 11th biennial convention of the Eastern Synod, which met at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ont., voted 197-75 to allow the so-called "local option" on same-sex blessings after about an hour of intense debate. Local option allows a pastor to bless the unions of same-sex couples but only after a two-thirds majority vote by his or her congregation and after consultation with the bishop.

Under Lutheran polity, a bishop cannot veto a decision made by a synod or congregation. Other synods could also appeal the Eastern synod's decision.

Bishop Schultz said, however, that jurisdiction over same-sex blessings resides with the national convention. In an interview with the *Kitchener Record*, Bishop Schultz likened the Eastern Synod's vote to the act of civil disobedience launched by the civil rights movement in the United States, which sought equal rights for African Americans in the 1960s. "Social change doesn't occur in societies unless somebody pushes the boundaries," he told *The Record*. – *Anglican Journal*

The connected church

Laying out a dream to virtually link a thousand congregations | BY KEITH KNIGHT

For perhaps the first time in our denomination's history, we are able to use technology effectively to bridge gaps of isolationism. We use e-mail to connect instantly with people across the country. We access the Internet to discover the latest news about our church's disaster response. We search the denomination's website for the location of a church in an area that we intend to visit.

Technology allows us to become connected in ways that were never possible before. If a congregation has its own website, it becomes a way for members to connect to each other. Some churches have all of their members on an e-mail list where they receive prayer requests throughout the week, the bulletin on the Friday before worship, and a copy of the sermon on Monday. A presbytery website provides a way for ministers and elders to stay connected to presbytery business. A synod website expands that sense of community.

When all 960 congregational websites, plus presbytery websites, plus synod websites, plus the denominational website are interconnected, amazing things can happen. The denomination becomes a community; the nation becomes a village.

I have a dream. It consists of a computer in every church, and a website for every church, presbytery and synod. All of them interconnected with the denominational website. Interconnected. A common News page for all where the latest stories are posted: a prayer request by an overseas partner, a story of the latest disaster, the official opening of a new church, the induction of a new minister. This is where community happens.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada has traditionally communicated more formally through the courts of the church. Official church business continues to be conducted through the courts, by way of dockets, minutes, motions, recommendations, overtures and the Barrier Act. That is an essential part of who we are as Presbyterians.

The Internet allows for a more informal communication among Presbyterians and even between the courts of the church. Technology tends to blur boundaries. Communication becomes a level playing field where church, presbytery, synod and national office interact regularly and easily.

In this dream, the denominational website is part of an integrated network with presbyteries and congregations. This is where information is shared, where church treasurers submit statistical information to the national office in a password-protected environment, where news about Presbyterians Sharing… can be shared throughout the year, where congregations talk about their best practices … all with appropriate security where required.

A website also provides a more formal way for a congregation or presbytery to tell its story. It is a place where ministry



I have a dream. It consists of a computer in every church, and a website for every church, presbytery and synod. All of them interconnected with the denominational website

can be celebrated and where various committees and groups can post their documents. It is also a growing place for community: where groups or individuals engage in discussions or chats, or post pictures.

New software programs make it possible to create an interactive News page that is common to all 1,000 websites—where changes to one page can automatically change the News page of all websites so that all share similar stories.

It will be possible to create music files of hymns from the *Book of Praise* or other contemporary songs that can be downloaded and taught. Appropriate copyright approvals would be in place to do that.

There are plans to enhance the appearance and capabilities of the national website (www.presbyterian.ca) so that it becomes more interactive: more discussion forums, the introduction of blogging to accompany news stories, a library of audio and video clips.

Technology will help Presbyterians develop an interest in life beyond their own congregation. Meanwhile, those congregations are also revitalized and energized. Technology will not make this happen; only people will. This therefore will only begin to happen if the commitment is in place at the presbytery and congregational levels. – *Keith Knight is associate secretary, resource production and communication.*

PHOTO: © 2006 JUPITERIMAGES CORPORATION

Creating a culture of prevention

Past abuse inspires one woman to fight for girls' rights | BY AMY MACLACHLAN

"I saw a lot of girls reflected in me," Betty Makoni of Zimbabwe told the *Record* during a visit to Canada last year. "Exactly what they worried about was what once worried me. It was hard to explain why I wanted to do this, but in my heart, I felt that if I accomplished this mission, then I will have lived life to the full."



Makoni was abused as a child and although she often finds it difficult to talk about it, she could not bear to hear of stories like her own. She did not want to hear of one more girl being raped by a relative or teacher, did not want to hear of children being married off to aging men, and did not want to hear of female children being denied an education while their brothers were allowed to go to school.

Still, in the powerfully patriarchal culture in which she lives, she had to convince her father and husband that something needed to be done about abused children. "Dominican sisters from Germany enabled me to go to school, and I'm greatly inspired by those who influenced me. If it had not been for the sisters, I could have been one of the lost women," she said. "When you see a girl who is happy, living a life you didn't, it's good for you. It heals the pain."

Betty Makoni is director and founder of the Girl Child Network, an organization empowering girls in all spheres of life through education, support and advocacy. She started the network after a discussion with 10 schoolgirls, who admitted the struggles they face each day, living in the male-dominated society of Zimbabwe.

"Girls have to learn that it's their right to have protection from abuse," she said. "And now 20,000 girls are making a breakthrough. There's a new breed of women." She started the network in 1998, when the first girls' club—a staple to the organization's mission—began at the school where she used to teach. Neighbouring schools soon joined in and today there are 350 clubs.

In a society where women's voices are often stifled, the clubs offer a safe, respectful place where girls can gather and tell their stories of abuse, rape and marginalization. Girls learn to create and protect their personal space, heal from past trauma, learn the importance of an education, build their self esteem and set goals. Leaders of the clubs are elected by the members, teaching the girls about the electoral process. Girls often branch off and start their own clubs, and are increasingly helping to empower their mothers, who are often set in traditional ways.

Makoni said it is imperative to teach girls about equality and empowerment when they are young; before they internalize ideas such as marriage equals success, and being outspoken is a turn-off for men. She said the older generations are often shocked by this new behaviour, where to them, staying after school to talk about girls' rights is akin to a revolution.

The GCN also acts as an advocate for girls' issues, fosters community development, and provides basic supplies, such as school fees, clothing, food and medical expenses, to girls in poverty. "You can't deal with rights and tell a girl to be empowered when she is starving," said Makoni. "It's holistic empowerment."

To help spread the word, the Prize Betty Makoni was created to award organizations for innovation in anti-abuse initiatives. Created in 2003, the award is given out each year on Nov. 19, the World Day of Prevention for Child Abuse. Last year, organizations from the United States, Colombia, Pakistan and Malawi were awarded for their efforts.

The network recently released a CD entitled *Wake Up Girls*, with songs sung by various girls' clubs in English and native languages about rape and abuse and telling girls to take charge and speak out. "Telling their stories should make it possible that it does not happen again," said Makoni. "We must create a culture of prevention—country to country, woman to woman, girl to girl. That's why I talk; so it doesn't have to happen again." For more information: *gcn.org.zw*.

Girl Child Network wins UN award

Betty Makoni's Girl Child Network received the inaugural Red Ribbon award (given by the United Nations Development Programme) for addressing gender inequalities that fuel the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Makoni, who was in Toronto to speak at the International AIDS Conference, accepted the award, along with long-time GCN supporter Tawona Shadreck Gwashavanhu and 17-year-old girls' club member Silence Mazunga.

Four other organizations were rewarded for their work in other areas of HIV/AIDS prevention. The winners receive $20,000 US, and were chosen from nearly 600 nominees.

WCC on world issues

ENI–The World Council of Churches, a grouping of 348 mainly Protestant and Orthodox denominations, representing more than 560 million Christians, concluded its central committee meeting in early September with statements on several world issues:

- The committee condemned extra-judicial killings in the Philippines and called on the country's government to disband "death squads," private militias and paramilitary forces operating outside the official chain of government command.
- The committee urged the government of Sri Lanka and the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam to respect the terms and conditions of a 2002 ceasefire agreement.
- The committee urged the government of Sudan to agree to the deployment of UN peacekeepers to help the peaceful resolution of conflict in the Darfur region.
- The committee urged the creation of a "truth and reconciliation commission" in northern Uganda to support initiatives in the region which has been the scene of a civil conflict between the Ugandan government and the rebel Lord's Resistance Army.
- The committee lamented the July 2006 collapse of the Doha Round of trade talks within the World Trade Organization, describing the breakdown as a "blow to multilateral relationships in global trade."
- The committee urged religious and political leaders to work to ensure the return of displaced persons, co-existence and reconciliation in the divided region of Kosovo as the basis of any long-term settlement.

For the complete text of these and other declarations go to *www.oikoumene.org* and follow the appropriate links.

Islam is not oil and terror

ENI–The Rev. Soritua Nababan, a Christian leader in the world's most populous Muslim nation, says the stereotyped idea of Islam tied to "oil and terror" should be rejected and he believes strengthening Muslim moderates in their own communities through dialogue can help reduce conflict.

The ephorus, or bishop, one of the eight presidents of the World Council of Churches, knows conflict. "I was a freedom fighter against the Dutch as a schoolboy" in Indonesia, he noted. But, he said, "I have an idea to widen Christian Muslim relationships dictated by the centuries-long paradigm of crusade against Islam, or jihad, or Islamic war."

"The majority of Muslims live in Asia and the biggest number of Muslims living in a country is in Indonesia and the most moderate are there," said Nababan. "I think it is our task in our interreligious dialogue and cooperation to strengthen the role of moderate Muslims in their own communties, rather than letting the extremists take over." He noted: "There are extreme groups even among Christians."

Religion an obstacle

ENI–"Why is it that religious institutions and religious leadership seem to be an obstacle for peace-building rather than a solution?" asked Rabbi David Rosen, international director of inter-religious relations with the American Jewish Committee and the International Jewish Committee at the Assembly of the World Conference of Religions for Peace in Kyoto.

"Often, because religion relates to our identity so profoundly, when our identity is wounded, when we feel hurt, traumatized, vulnerable, disrespected, we would call upon our religious traditions to give us a sense of stability, meaning, and purpose," he explained in his speech on advancing shared security through peace-building.

"And very often we do it out of a sense of wound, out of a sense of alienation, out of a sense of humiliation, then we would seek self-justification in a way that demonizes and disregards and stigmatizes the other," Rosen said in his address to the August meeting of the inter-religious body holding its eighth world assembly.

"For this reason, politicians come to the conclusion that if they want to engage in peace-building, they need to keep away from religion," said Rosen, citing the example of the Israel-Palestinian situation. "We must be honest and acknowledge that terrible things are done in the name of religion. An inter-religious structure is essential to provide psycho-spiritual glue, without which no process will hold together."

Serious 'God problems'

ENI–A US survey confirmed that the Democratic Party has "a serious God problem," with only 26 per cent of those surveyed feeling the party is friendly to religion.

However, the survey indicated that the Republican Party has problems of its own, with the percentage of those feeling the Republicans are friendly to religion dropping from 55 per cent in 2005 to 47 per cent this year.

In other findings, the survey found that only seven per cent of the US public identify with what some see as a burgeoning "religious left" political movement. By contrast, some 11 per cent of those surveyed label themselves as "religious right."

While the survey found that white evangelical Christians comprise 24 per cent of the population, 32 per cent call themselves "liberal or progressive Christians."

The survey found, those who place themselves in the conservative camp remain a more cohesive group, sharing many religious and social positions, than their liberal counterparts.

Czechs sell churches

ENI–The Czech Republic's Roman Catholic church is selling properties at cut prices in an effort to cope with plummeting congregations and donations.

"We don't have the money to keep them," said Martin Horalek, spokesperson for the Catholic Bishops' Conference.

About 200 churches, monasteries and convents were returned to the Catholic Church in the 1990s, often in derelict condition, after they were seized following the 1948 imposition of communist rule.

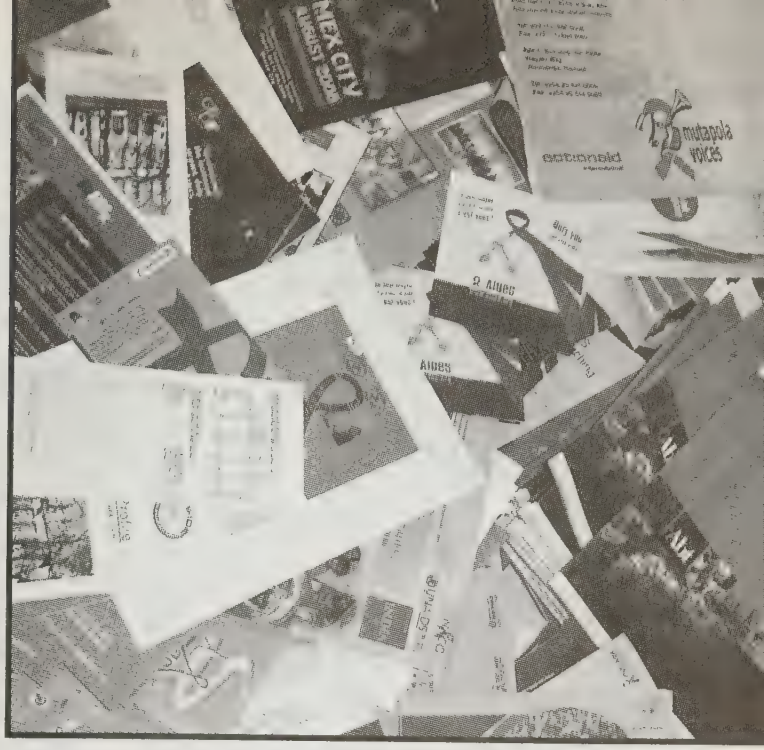
The number of Czech Catholics declined from just above four to below three million people between 1991 and 2001.

"Too often, the impact of religious extremism on human affairs has hit the headlines in a very negative way," said Archdeacon Colin Williams of the Conference of European Churches. "Rather, more attention needs to be given to the assiduous way in which churches and other faith groups have worked to promote within national, regional and international decision-making the values of justice and freedom and equality."

Six billion stories

And, we have to care for each one

BY ANDREW FAIZ



I have a bag at my feet that weighs over 12 kilograms. It is filled with literature I picked up at the AIDS conferences in Toronto—the faith based and the international—in August. The bag is crammed with books, brochures, pamphlets, posters, CD ROMs (some of which may have dozens of documents on them), advertising campaigns, postcards and even a few toys from HIV/AIDS-related organizations around the planet. I have more information than I need on the socio-economic, psychological, political, medical, scientific and spiritual aspects of the virus. In this bag are pharmaceutical corporations explaining their medicines and advocacy groups damning pharmaceuticals. Mostly, though, the bag is filled with very similar sounding material from many, many, many different advocacy agencies.

Just from the top of the bag I grab material from three agencies, pushing three programs, on three continents. The Mukta Project, India, has produced a booklet that is basic and sincere using colour codes and simple graphics and is meant for illiterate sex workers to circle or check appropriate icons. Street Outreach Services, Toronto, has a booklet that is graphic only in its language, listing the sort of activities sex workers might be expected to perform, the inherent dangers and some precautions. Bundeszentrale fur gesundheitliche Aufklarung, Germany, also has an HIV/AIDS risk analysis booklet, which is very sophisticated, using simple icons, colour codes and simple text, and a tongue-in-cheek sense of humour I imagine would be lost on the uneducated Indian sex workers.

These three programs illustrate the need for specificity in reaching target groups. The amount of effort gone into each is necessary—and yet...

The cumulative affect of all the material is to create a white noise in the background of our North American lives. It is too much—that was my sense while at the conferences. I was overwhelmed. Particularly as I walked through the dozens of aisles and saw heaps of material at each kiosk. I saw dozens of videos, from faith-based and secular agencies, with their African or Indian local, speaking of their pathetic lives. Of politics, violence and gender inequalities, of death, of poverty, of hunger; and, very quickly it all became conflated into one big story, which was too big to comprehend.

Even the presenters were participating in this conflation: They spoke of Africa as if it were a single neighbourhood. It isn't of course; it's a large continent with 54 countries. Each of which has its own story—no, each of which has its own myriad stories. There are thousands of villages, millions of people. There is a huge difference between the issues faced in Uganda and those in Malawi. The HIV strain contained in Uganda is not as mean-spirited and the Ugandan government's programs have been active for a very long time. The prevalence rate is not as high in East Africa as it is in sub-Saharan Africa. And, there are many other differences, more specific, more local.

Tom Scalway, of World AIDS Campaign, put it perfectly. He told a workshop round-table there is no one story. It sounds like one story—especially when the casual observer sees an endless string of Africans talking about their horrific lives.

There are over six billion stories on this planet and most of them are sad and depressing. As Erin Woods noted last month in the guest editorial we are the lucky ones—we have won the biggest lottery of all—who live on this continent. Or most of us. I'm guessing that includes most of you reading this. And, the price we have to pay for our good luck is to remain vigilant to the stories around us.

Still, I think often of the dear lady in our church who didn't want a copy of the national church calendar bearing photos of African children. She said, "I don't want that child looking down at me while I have my morning porridge." The combination of guilt and disingenuousness she expresses is very honest. She may not have intended to be this honest but she managed it inadvertently.

There are six billion stories on this planet and most of them upset our stomachs. They're horrendous in ways we cannot imagine and if we're honest with ourselves we know we treat them like white noise in the background of our lives. But, we know what we have to do—this is where the church, a communal body, has advantages over all other institutions. We have to put our faith in action, not with guilt over our luck but with joy in our shared humanity.

Andrew Faiz is a writer, producer and filmmaker. He is also managing editor of the Record. You can reach him at mngeditor@presbyterianrecord.ca.



The southern view from the Macleod family home, early 1900s.

A joyful response

Returning to his Chinese roots, a missionary feels he's finally come home

BY DON MACLEOD

"Pastor!" "Pastor!" "Canada!" "Canada!"

Our luggage had just been deposited in our room on the 11th floor of Ningbo's ultramodern 28 storey World Hotel. We heard insistent cries coming from the elevator. Two representatives of the local Three Self Movement were trying to locate foreigners; guests referred to them from Shanghai headquarters. We caught up with them, went downstairs to the lobby and boarded a church van waiting for us. We were about to be reconnected with my missionary past in China.

Ningbo, a city of 1.25 million, is the capital of Zhejiang province. Wide boulevards, modern skyscrapers, even a transplanted University of Nottingham, mark this innovative and prosperous city on the coast of central China, a half hour's plane ride south of Shanghai. Ningbo was the closest city to my grandparents' missionary post at Ninghai.

Ningbo was the city to which my grandfather came in 1897 as a 26-year-old raw missionary recruit from the Hebrides whose first language was Gaelic. Ningbo's British consulate was where he was married to an American (who lost her citizenship as a result) four years later. Ningbo was where my father was born. And 20 years later, having left Ningbo a healthy 50-year-old the night before, it was to Ningbo he returned in the final hours of his unsuccessful fight with cholera. Ningbo was where his funeral was held, and in Ningbo Foreign Cemetery he was buried.

All of this was swirling through my mind as we were driven to the Century Three-Self Church. There, in a hospitality room with red damask tapestry, treated to cups of steaming tea, my wife and I, and a friend who had grown up with me in China, were greeted with great ceremony. Church representatives were even gracious about my fractured and fragmentary language, neglected since my Chinese childhood over 50 years ago.

I showed pictures that told our family's story better than I could. There was one of my grandparents' wedding day, another of my grandfather and his evangelists, still others of my father and his three sisters as children. Then I produced a series of photos, taken from an old album, faded after all the years, of the home my grandfather had built for his fiancée in 1900 as he was preparing to marry. The China Inland Mission demanded of its amorous language school students two mandatory years of separation (in opposite parts of the country) before they were allowed to wed.

Suddenly, there was a collective gasp of recognition and delight. Each photo of my ancestral home was taken to the light, details shared and discussed. They were particularly attracted to a view down a narrow defile to a house. Puzzled, I asked why such excitement. They replied with great emotion: "We will take you there. It's still the same house. Nothing has changed."

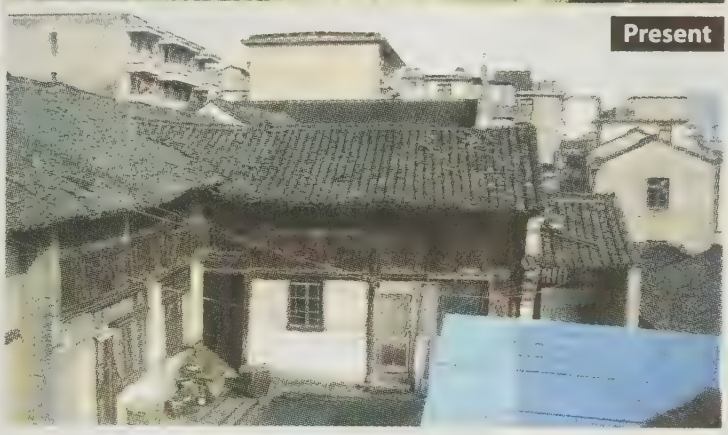
The mandatory feast at one of Ningbo's finest restaurants delayed our visit for several hours. Eventually we were whisked down a motorway to Ninghai. A trip that took my grandparents 14 hours, and which finally cost my grandfather his life his final night while en route on a sampan, was made in 40 minutes. We paid our toll at the booth, stopped by at another thriving church which had once been a mission outstation, and in 10 minutes, passing through Ninghai's wide and bustling modern boulevards, we were deposited at a narrow and ancient laneway. Climbing a steep ascent we were finally beckoned to turn left.

And then it happened. Clutching the photo I saw the identical view before me: a narrow defile leading over the wall to a modest western-style home. Two storeys high, only the latticework on the upper balcony altered, ancient photographs suddenly came alive. Our party soon summoned all the neighbours, the photos were passed around, hurried trips to scanners and photocopying shops were made. The smaller









The author's grandparents, Kenneth and Katherine MacLeod, left. Their mission today, centre. Time doesn't change everything: the Macleod family home across the centuries, right.

homes around the compound—where single missionaries, Bible women and pastors had lived—are now occupied by squatters. The government has recently returned our family home to the church and the first floor is the church's social centre. The upstairs has two apartments where two old elders without family are housed. There were general apologies all round for the state of housekeeping as our guides showed us my father's and his sisters' bedrooms. On the balcony outside, again with ancient photos for comparison, the silhouette of distant hills remained unchanged. In a China where everything is being torn down to make room for the new and the modern, it was an astonishing discovery.

A pastor who was accompanying us said, "We are a church that has lost its history. Our records were all destroyed. We don't know who brought Christianity to us or how and when our church started. Write something about your grandfather, have it translated, and send it to us. We want to learn more about our roots."

By now a crowd had gathered, noisy chatter everywhere, fingers pointing at us and at photographs, questions addressed to me in Chinese that I could barely understand. We were summoned to walk over to the church, about 100 metres away. Built in 1905 by my grandfather, since 1980 when it reopened, it has been extended front and back. The elders gathered and at the communion table we held an impromptu service.

'We are a church that has lost its history. Our records were all destroyed. We don't know who brought Christianity to us or how and when our church started'

My childhood friend and I mustered all the Chinese choruses we could remember and the crowd that had gathered joined in, singing along with us, the words binding us together in a common faith. After five or six of them I started the old gospel song, "Coming home, Lord, I'm coming home." As we sang in Chinese a great wave of emotion swept over all of us. One of the older men turned to me and said simply: "You have indeed come home."

Today in Ninghai, we were told, there are 20,000 believers in a population of 60,000. In addition to several services in the mother church, there are other places of worship. Frequent conversions and baptisms after careful instruction are the norm; sharing one's faith a joyful response to the spiritual emptiness created by China's new material prosperity and disillusionment with the past. Growth is simply the consequence of a vibrant faith community. Travelling in three provinces of China and worshipping with Christians, we heard Jesus-centred preaching and witnessed transformed lives.

Not that every province is as promising as Zhejiang. In my parents' old mission station in Shandong, where we spent a weekend, the entire missionary compound of 25 or more buildings—a vocational institute, a Bible school, a chapel, a theological seminary, missionary residences, student dormitories, an orphanage—was completely destroyed in 1946/7. Only the hospital remains as a mute witness to the missionary presence. Elsewhere many Chinese medical institutions are belatedly, but now proudly, acknowledging their Christian origins.

Even in south Shandong, the church I was taken to as a youngster on Sunday mornings, has hundreds of believers filling the building. The choir, which my mother once led, sings old traditional hymns that have gone out of style in North America. Indeed, one young believer turned to me and said, "We hear that many of your churches are almost empty in Canada. We need to come and re-evangelize your country as missionaries, returning the favour 100 years ago you did for us." Perhaps he's on to something.

Don MacLeod is presently coordinating Symposium 2007, Engaging the University: Student Mission and the Christian Mind prior to the IFES World Assembly when 650 student leaders from 155 countries will meet in Ancaster, Ont., July 11 - 20.



Delegates at the Ecumenical Pre-Conference at the XVI International AIDS Conference hold a rally in accordance with the conference theme: Faith in Action.

'Our faith demands

Christo Greyling is a tall man with a ready smile. He moves with the easy grace of an athlete and speaks with the soft lilt of his South African roots. Standing in front of a crowd or speaking one-to-one, Greyling conveys the impression he is deeply interested in the welfare, ideas and conversation of others. But, mostly it's that smile that lights up a room.

Christo Greyling is HIV-positive and has been since 1987, though he didn't announce that publicly until 1992. He describes those five years, between knowing and telling, as "long, slow and scary. Who can I tell? What if it will blow up in my face?"

Rev. Christo Greyling is a minister in the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa. "I would never choose to be HIV-positive," he says. "I was a minister!" When he finally did disclose his status to the church hierarchy, he was asked to procure a statement from his doctor proving he had contracted the virus through blood transfusion because of his hemophilia and not through sexual activity. "Guilty or innocent. That's what they wanted to know. My friends joke that I contracted HIV the easy way, by being innocent.

"Of course, that judgmental process is wrong, immoral and sinful.

"We are often the second son," he continues, referring to the parable of the prodigal son. "We forget God is the God of compassion. We lose our compassion."

Greyling has been married for 16 years and has two daughters. Neither his wife nor his girls are HIV-positive thanks to antiretroviral medication. And while that might prove AIDS is both manageable and preventable, being "positive" has changed Greyling's life. For the better part of the past two decades he has given his life to talking about the virus, the disease and the contributing factors that promote both, the greatest of which, to his mind, is stigma.



'HIV/AIDS is simply a mirror to look closely at the world we live in. HIV/AIDS is not the sin: it is stigma.'

by Andrew Faiz

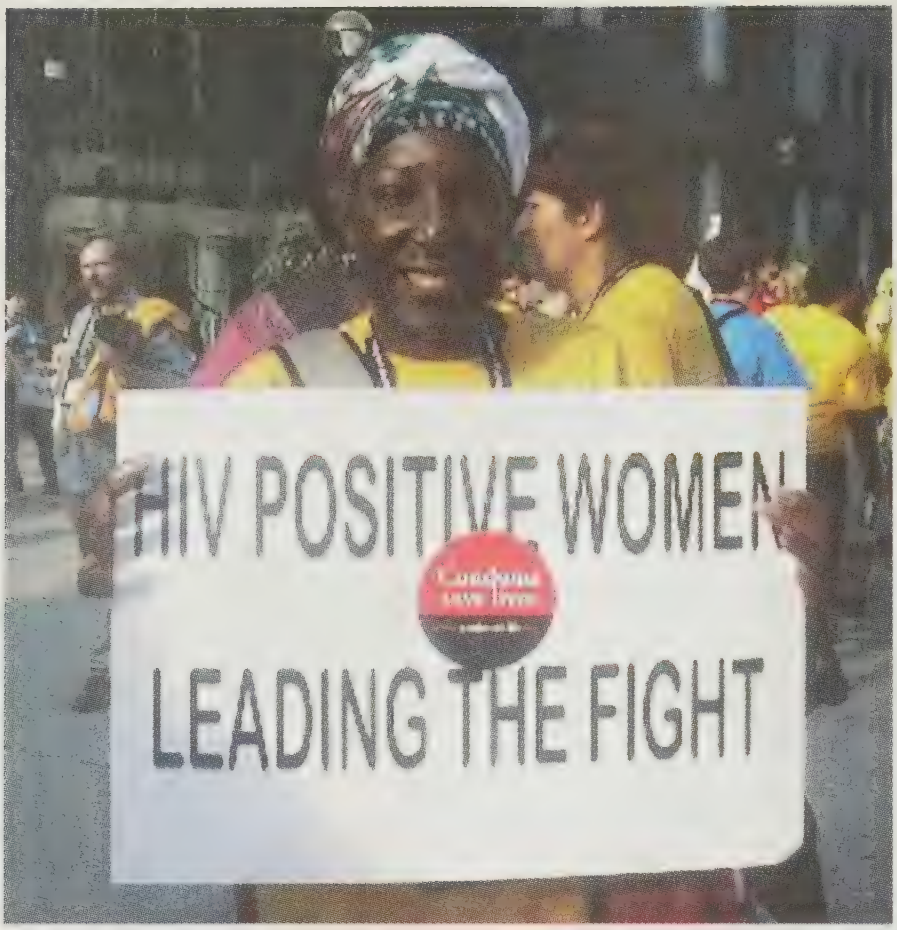
more of us'

Stigma was the most commonly used word, the most commonly expressed idea, at the Ecumenical Pre-Conference at the XVI International AIDS Conference held in Toronto in August. The approximately 500 delegates, representing mostly Christian denominations across the planet, along with a handful of interfaith delegates, heard and traded stories of the devastation caused in their country, their churches and their communities by the human immunodeficiency virus and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome. East met West, North met South; donors met recipients; front-line caregivers met heads of national and international faith bodies. There was some self-congratulation; the importance of faith and faith-based organizations was affirmed. But, squirming in amongst it all was inherent criticism of denominational and interfaith rivalry and of the barriers caused by the theology, practice and custom of churches.

The theme of the ecumenical conference was Faith in Action: Keeping the Promise. At the opening plenary, Sister Patricia Talone, vice-president of Mission Services of Catholic Health Association, said, "We stand at the intersection where the healthy meet the sick, where the young meet the old, where the rich meet the poor. This is not a comfortable place to stand.

"We may turn our back on God, but God never turns His back on us." Talone quoted Leviticus 26 to affirm the covenant God has made. "I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people." She extended that relationship to the "covenant to the poor and vulnerable. Those who are poor and marginalized have first claim on us. This responsibility extends to those beyond our borders."

And lurking within the spiritual reflection there is always the criticism: "Some have twisted theology to call AIDS the wages of sin," Talone observed. These were the twinned themes from the opening salvo: Christians must keep the promise to God, to the sick and vulnerable and to do so they must revisit their own theological learning. "What we have



Andrena Ingram at a rally for positive women in Toronto

received from God calls for responsibility," she told the conference. "Our faith demands more of us. Our God demands more of us. Our sisters and brothers demand more of us. Our future demands more of us."

Rev. Johannes Petrus Heath is an HIV-positive Anglican priest from South Africa. When he learned of his status in 2000 he told his bishop, who was sympathetic, but cautioned Heath to not tell his congregation for fear of backlash. "And so, from the outset," Heath told *Christian Aid*, "my bishop and I were both victims of the stigma that surrounds HIV/AIDS."

In 2002, Heath co-founded the African Network of Religious Leaders Living with and Personally Affected by HIV and AIDS, of which he is now general secretary. ANERELA+ started with eight members. It now has more than 1,500. (Greyling is vice-chair.) To keep pace with the demands of the organization, Heath is no longer in a parish.

"HIV/AIDS is simply a mirror to look closely at the way we look at the world," Heath told the conference. "To come 25 years after this disease was first diagnosed and ask about the promise—the covenant with God—is an indication of how badly we have responded.

"HIV/AIDS is not the sin; it is stigma.

"We the faith community are called by God to be the caregivers. How is it that the body of Christ is so broken? How is it the church in the North can't feel the pain of the church in the South? I ask how is it the church in the South can't feel the pain of its own members?

"To keep the promise is to be the heart of God in the world."

Andrena Ingram is convinced her husband died of stigma. For the six months prior to his death in 1993 he suffered the "stress of shame. His fear consumed him. Fear of being rejected. Fear of being looked at differently." He had been drug-free for five years. It was only at his funeral in September that the truth came out to the family at large.

Even when she was diagnosed HIV-positive, she spent the first six months "waiting to die." It was the same pattern, the same shame, the same fear. "I had to get over myself. I had to get proactive."

Ingram was a delegate at both the Ecumenical Pre-Conference and the XVI AIDS Conference, sponsored by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. (You can read her conference blog at notmyvirus.wordpress.com.) The former drug addict has been clean and sober—"in recovery"—for 18 years, the last three spent at a Lutheran seminary in Philadelphia. Next year she will be, she hopes, awaiting a call.

On her blog she writes: "I am living with the HIV virus (and a few other pesky things that would love to keep me down). How did I contract it? Well, I know how, but the when's and by whom is kinda moot at this point. What is important is that I am living with it. Each year goes by, and I am still here.

"If God brings you to it, He can bring you through it!"

Ingram, 51, no longer suffers the shame of her past. She was who she was, she did what she did. "I am living with it, not dying of it." She refuses to make the same mistake her husband did: she refuses to self-stigmatize, or to worry about the awkwardness others feel.

HIV/AIDS exposes the past—the wrong turns, the youthful decisions, the socially unacceptable behaviour. HIV/AIDS exposes one's life—sexuality, addictions, recreational choices. HIV/AIDS is caused by the exchange of bodily fluids, and bodily fluids are never discussed in polite company. They are never discussed from pulpits or at the dinner table; they are discussed disingenuously at cocktail parties.

World religions are not comfortable talking about sex—they preach that everybody should have one sexual partner in life, for life; and, though that may be true for some individuals, it simply isn't the case for many. (Never was.) The accusation of promiscuity rears. This is the stigma of sex.

Any discussion of HIV/AIDS goes into unsavoury corners, those dark little alleys of the world. Sex is about gender politics, which is about equity, which is about economics, which is about power; all of this is about justice; and justice is about Christ; or, more accurately, Christ is about justice.

Or he should be; but someplace in the process the discussion falls apart. Because any discussion of HIV/AIDS exposes life—we are all broken but we are unable to speak of this

PHOTO: COURTESY OF ECUMENICAL ADVOCACY ALLIANCE (THIS PAGE AND PREVIOUS PAGE)

for fear we will be judged. Like Andrena's husband, people—and institutions—die in silence for fear of stigma.

Baruna Victor understands this well. When she first started her work with the Church of North India amongst villagers she could not speak openly about sex or sexuality. Through 10 years traveling to rural locales, speaking to illiterate women, she quickly overcame her shyness. "It is very difficult to talk about it, but I must. I cannot go into a village and ask them to tell me their problem if I do not speak openly." By some estimates up to 80 per cent of Indians live in rural villages. "There are people in remote villages," says Victor, "who do not know that Delhi exists, or Bombay or Calcutta. They cannot imagine going there." These villagers are poor, illiterate, locked into their own cycle of survival, repeating rituals and traditions that have existed for generations.

The Banchara tribe in the central state of Madhya Pradesh (Bhopal is the capital) has long practiced what sociologists call traditional prostitution. First-born daughters are expected, at ages as young as 12, to become prostitutes. Their place of work may well be the family home; and, they can make up to $100US a day servicing half a dozen or more clients. "There are villages across the highways, along trucking routes. Thousands of trucks. The drivers are involved with these girls. We can't say it is just the sex workers; it is also the truck drivers. Everybody is at risk." (In Africa, as in India, the spread of HIV/AIDS can be tracked across trucking routes.)

The Church of North India covers three-quarters of India, and has a large network of clinics and community workers, along with 60 hospitals. It provides nursing training and many other services. Presbyterian World Service and Development sponsors six of its projects. One of these is headed by this year's winner of the E. H. Johnson award, Karuna Roy, coordinator of the HIV/AIDS Program based in New Delhi. Victor works in Roy's program.

She gives the example of the Banchara tribe to give a sense of the multiplicity of issues surrounding any HIV/AIDS program. The tribe has a cultural history of prostitution and that is how they have survived for generations. They may be dying but

CHURCHES PLAY INTEGRAL ROLE IN FIGHTING AIDS, EXPERTS SAY

Churches around the world have an integral part to play in the eradication of the AIDS pandemic, said Rick Warren, best-selling author of *The Purpose Driven Life*. "Government has a role," he said. "But it is highly overrated. Non-governmental organizations and business also have a role, but if we're ever going to eradicate the pandemic then we cannot do it without churches."

Warren, who spoke at the Ecumenical Pre-Conference, said churches have a greater advantage in responding to HIV/AIDS than the United Nations or any other resource. "We have the widest distribution in the world. There are millions of villages that do not have a school, a doctor, a hospital, but do have a church."

Recent disasters like the tsunami in southeast Asia and flooding in New Orleans proved churches could distribute aid faster than governments or NGOs by mobilizing the local church. "We have the biggest pool of volunteers—2.3 billion—in the world. And we speak more languages than the United Nations."

Despite his optimism, there was much discussion on the role faith-based organizations have played in the past. Peter Piot, executive director of UNAIDS, said faith-based organizations have contributed more in the past four years than in the previous 20, but there is still much to do. While it was acknowledged that faith-based organizations were very active on the ground level, there was much criticism of church leadership which often fails to recognize, appreciate and support these efforts. This disconnect between membership and leadership was deemed systemic during various workshops and plenary sessions.

Faith-based organizations were also criticized for letting doctrines get in the way of care. Traditional religious anxiousness and judgementalism over sex and sexuality and the use of condoms were cited as factors. Faith leaders were criticized for articulating moralistic positions often at odds with public health realities. There was also criticism that a silo mentality exists among denominations preventing a more effective delivery of services.

Dr. Milton Amayun, a senior adviser with World Vision, said there is plenty of funding through the Global Fund for AIDS and other agencies, but faith-based organizations "simply need to learn the tricks by gearing up their strategies and skills in proposal writing."

Amayun said "too many Canadians and Americans do not see the struggles, they are not burying the dead. But, I know if they are exposed to it, if they go to Africa they come back changed. I wish there was more of that movement."



Rick Warren and Canon Gideon Byamugisha of ANERELA+

Rev. Bernard Ntahoturi, Archbishop of the Episcopal Church of Burundi, echoed Warren's call to the World Council of Churches in August saying the Global Fund should be distributed through churches since they have the best access to affected populations.

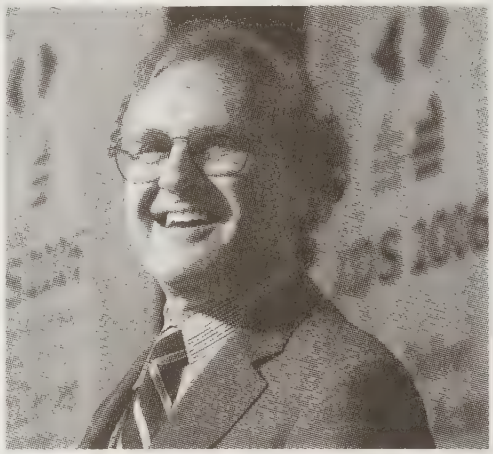
The central committee of the WCC went on to state that stigma is against the will of God and churches must make themselves "HIV-competent." – *AF with files from Presbyterian News Service of PC(USA).*

PHOTO: COURTESY OF ECUMENICAL ADVOCACY ALLIANCE

to their uneducated eyes the killer is invisible and at least they are eating. "They say 'we can't say no to prostitution.' They live in extreme poverty.

"We have to walk with these women. If a pregnant lady is positive we have to prevent transmission to the child. These are typical rural Indian villages. We have to provide antenatal clinics, also post-natal." Culture, tradition, gender, economics, survival, trade, power—the issues are multi-faceted.

It is not surprising that developed countries suffer less the ravages of HIV and AIDS than those known as developing. Canada has a prevalence rate of less than one per cent, while Lesotho's is almost a quarter of the population. Poverty is one of the major drivers of the pandemic, which was variously referred to during the conference as the worst in history and the scourge on the face of the planet. In parts of Africa, the urge to moralize has expedited the mortality rate.



UN Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa Stephen Lewis moderates a symposium on HIV and Food Security at the 16th World Aids Conference in Toronto.

South Africa's health minister does not believe HIV causes AIDS. At the closing of the conference, Stephen Lewis, UN ambassador to Africa for AIDS, lambasted South Africa as "the only country in Africa whose government continues to propound theories more worthy of a lunatic fringe than of a concerned and compassionate state. It is the only country in Africa, among all the countries I have traversed in the last five years, whose government is still obtuse, dilatory and negligent about rolling out treatment. The government has a lot to atone for. I'm of the opinion that they can never achieve redemption."

Manto Tshabalala-Msimang, South Africa's health minister, is unapologetic in continuing to promote what she refers to as "traditional cures": garlic, beetroot and lemon. Her country currently has five million people living with HIV. Without proper health care, plus the scaling up of medical resources, including thousands of new nurses, the prevalence rates will continue to grow across the continent.

AIDS has been called the most political of diseases; it could just as easily be seen as a theological malaise. It entered North American consciousness as "the Gay Disease" and was quickly declared a judgment from God. When significant numbers of heterosexuals became infected it was seen as a judgment from God against promiscuity.

The Roman Catholic Church, which provides much on-the-ground caregiving around the world, and which has amongst the largest networks of health-care locations, refuses to endorse the use of condoms as a means to prevent infection, although at least three cardinals have said they can be used in certain circumstances. This is despite pleadings from many African bishops to change this ruling. The church's position is that every sexual encounter must be open to procreation—it can never be solely recreational, even for married couples. (Despite the official line, Roman Catholic workers said several times during the conferences that local bishops, priests and health-care workers frequently ignore the Vatican's declaration on this point.)

Rev. Canon Gideon Byamugisha, another founding member of ANERELA+, was the first African Anglican priest to declare that he was HIV-positive. Byamugisha, who runs an HIV/AIDS clinic in Kampala, told the conference that for him condoms were a blessing: he could use them with his wife until medical

Check your bias

Part 1 of 3

Stigma is considered one of the major drivers of HIV/AIDS in the world—the systemic judgement of those affected into a guilty or innocent category. You know it happens, but certainly you're not a contributor.

Or are you?

This is a very simple exercise based on a hypothetical scenario. The three individuals below are all infected with a deadly virus they have contracted through sharing bodily fluids. You have the antidote but there is only enough for one. You have to decide which of the three gets the medication.

Based solely on the information below decide who gets to live.

CHARLES
Homosexual man

SALLY
Health-care Worker

NOMSA
Domestic Worker

Your choice for the one to receive the anti-viral medication: _____

Your reason: _____

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PHOTO: FRANK GUNN/CP PHOTO

science was able to provide them with the drugs to have children without passing the virus to either mother or child. He had to wait seven years. He was only one of two speakers at the Ecumenical Pre-Conference to hint he has had sex for other than procreation. The other was a pro-gay activist from New York City who openly declared that sex was fun. (Though both statements were applauded, there was no further chanting.)

Still, churches are trying to shake themselves free of biases regarding sex and sexuality. There was considerable conversation during the faith-based conference on the theological and biblical basis of care. At the end of one workshop, a Muslim delegate asked the obvious questions: what is so singly special about justifying compassion through the Bible; and, why work so hard to seek justifications for compassion when obviously it is the prime directive of all religions?

Calvin has been active in The Presbyterian Church in Canada his whole life. He has sat on session and been to General Assembly; his memories stretch back to PYPS and beyond. He's written letters to editor of the *Presbyterian Record* over the years. But, Calvin is not his real name—he is gay and he is HIV-positive.

Calvin tells many tales of disingenuity: of the man with gay sons who didn't believe homosexuals should be ministers. He tells tales of duplicity: of many gays and lesbians (like himself) who live a mostly-secret life within the church, but do not declare their sexuality openly for fear of backlash, of rejection. He tells tales of gays and lesbians who have done very well within the church, made great careers within the church, without once speaking of their sexuality. He also tells tales of "saints" who have known or sensed his sexuality and have provided him great pastoral guidance over the years. At the same time he recognizes they too have participated in the disingenuity and the duplicity.

Calvin knows exactly what will happen if he comes out in the church: the theory is called the Church of Thirds. A third will be deeply vexed and will confront him personally or the corporate body of the church through General Assembly; a third will not care either way; a third will make him and his sexuality a cause celebre. (The United Church of Canada lost tens of thousands of members, including many clergy, when it approved the ordination of homosexuals. Many of them joined the Presbyterian Church.)

But he is not a radical—his love for the church is greater than his desire to rock the boat. "It's a persistent quality," he says, "to be forgiving of the errors of others. It's a spiritual strength. What would I gain by leaving? I would lose a whole life, and a lot of friends."

But, while the church defines him in one way, his sexuality defines him in another. Through the 1990s when AIDS funerals were ubiquitous he was not able to take the loss of friends to his church. Calvin has been living with HIV for 12 years. "It's like going to war and coming back alive and not understanding why you still live while many others have died." The pain and the guilt live with him constantly.

Continued on page 28



PHOTO: ANDREW FAIZ

A FORCE IN THE STORM

Esther Lupafya wakes up around six o'clock every morning. Before an hour has passed, before she can have her morning shower, several people have already knocked on her door seeking money, medicine, guidance and food.

By the time she reaches the office at seven, there is a crowd of people waiting for her. She goes to morning prayers and by 7:30 she is at her computer checking her emails, progress reports, the previous day's reports from the various homecare workers and so forth. At 8:30 she goes out into the community. Some days she may not get back home until 7:00 in the evening. Often by the end of the day she will not have accomplished everything she had planned to do.

Lupafya is a nurse—has been since 1989, and a midwife—and is currently the HIV coordinator at the Ekwendeni Mission Hospital in Malawi, which is supported by PWS&D. She is a no-nonsense sort of person, speaking plainly, freely offering her advice, especially on issues of childcare and rearing. She also has a quiet sense of humour and a subtle wit.

Everyday Lupafya visits some home-based patients; then she goes to supervise the school and visits some young people who live a long drive away. She tries to return by five o'clock to make notes at the office. From her waking moment to bedtime she encounters the same requests: food, medicine, school fees, money, soap, feed for pigs, drugs for the chickens, staples like sugar. One of the hospital programs is for income generation: they attempt a holistic approach to meet the social, mental, spiritual and physical needs but, as Lupafya says: "Their needs are huge but you only have so much."

An estimated one million people, or about 15 per cent of Malawi's population are living with HIV; half of those are under 14 years of age.

Lupafya prays the developed world will not forget or tire of supporting the developing world. "In almost every walk of Africa they are suffering with HIV. We are all supported by donors and we worry you will start to think 'how long can we support those Africans?' So, we pray for you.

More important than donations though, Lupafya also seeks prayers that "one day the disease will be gone—that one day we should all be safe."

Lupafya, and the Ekwendeni Mission Hospital, is one small force in this monster storm. When confronted with the numbers she says simply, "I love the people who are suffering." – *AF*

OVERSEAS PARTNER LAUDS FAITH PRE-CONFERENCE

The Presbyterian Church in Canada sent eight international partner delegates, three national committee members and three staff to the ecumenical AIDS pre-conference. PWS&D committee members Dianne Ollerenshaw and Kate Ballagh-Steeper and international affairs committee member Ian McDonald joined staff Guy Smagghe, Karen Plater and Bella Lam as part of the 500 delegates from faith-based organizations around the world.

Plater, resource and communications coordinator for PWS&D, also chaired the Christian Host Committee that helped organize the mostly Christian conference discussing the AIDS pandemic. She opened the conference on behalf of the committee and all Canadian churches.

Reflecting on the success of the conference, Plater said it was a great opportunity to support partners who work with those infected and affected by HIV and AIDS. "It helps raise awareness in Canada and internationally of issues facing many people. And it helps answer the question, how are churches going to be involved?"

Esther Lupafya, HIV co-ordinator at the Ekwendeni Mission Hospital in Malawi, was one of the partners sponsored by PWS&D to attend both the Ecumenical Pre-Conference and the XVI International AIDS Conference. "I am very glad I came," she told the *Record*. "Here we can share the hardship faced in many countries and at the same time we know of the hard work being done in research, which is very expensive, in the Western world."

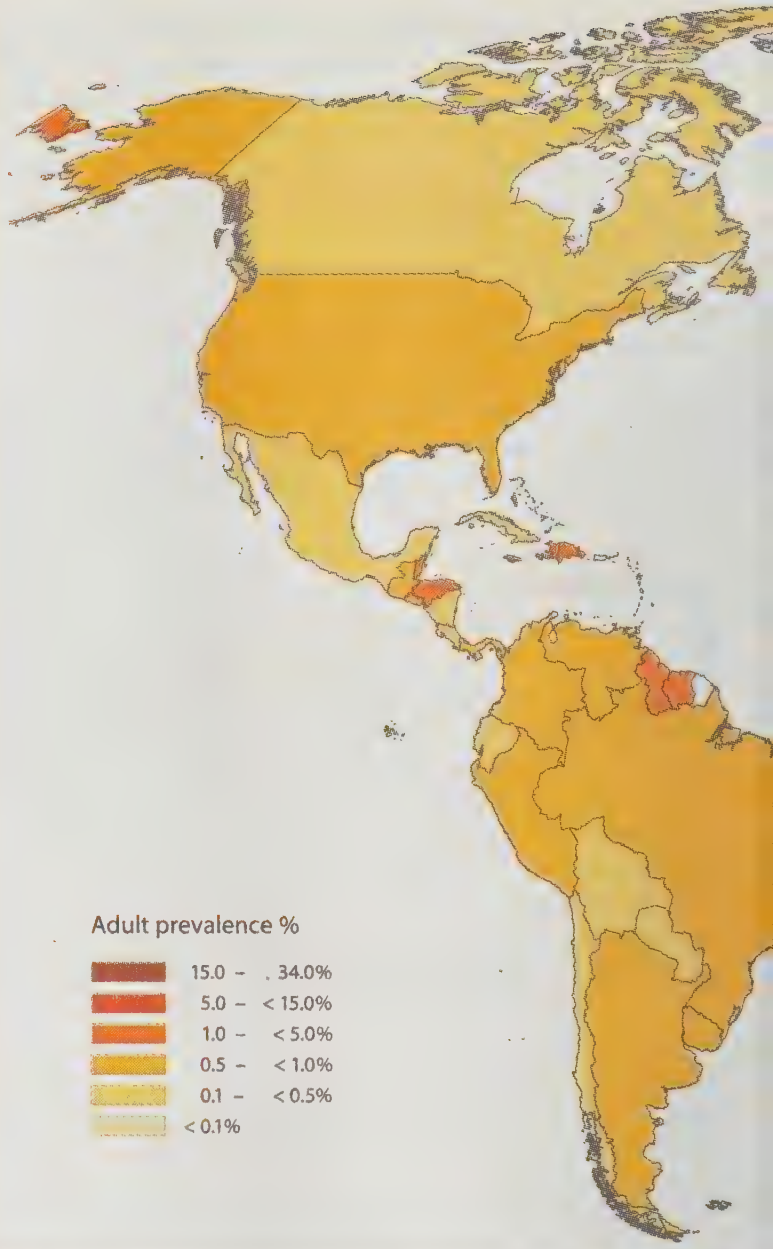


ILLUSTRATION: COURTESY OF UNAIDS

Check your bias

Part 2 of 3

You're right, there wasn't enough information the first time around. Here's some more information by which to make a more informed decision.

CHARLES

- is a doctor
- infected by patient
- long-term relationship with Dennis, a pharmacist

SALLY

- infected sexually
- works in an escort agency after hours to subsidize income
- has two children

NOMSA

- found to be HIV+ when wanted to remarry, man asked to produce HIV test result
- infected during a medical procedure
- first husband died of AIDS-related TB

Your choice for the one to receive the anti-viral medication: _____

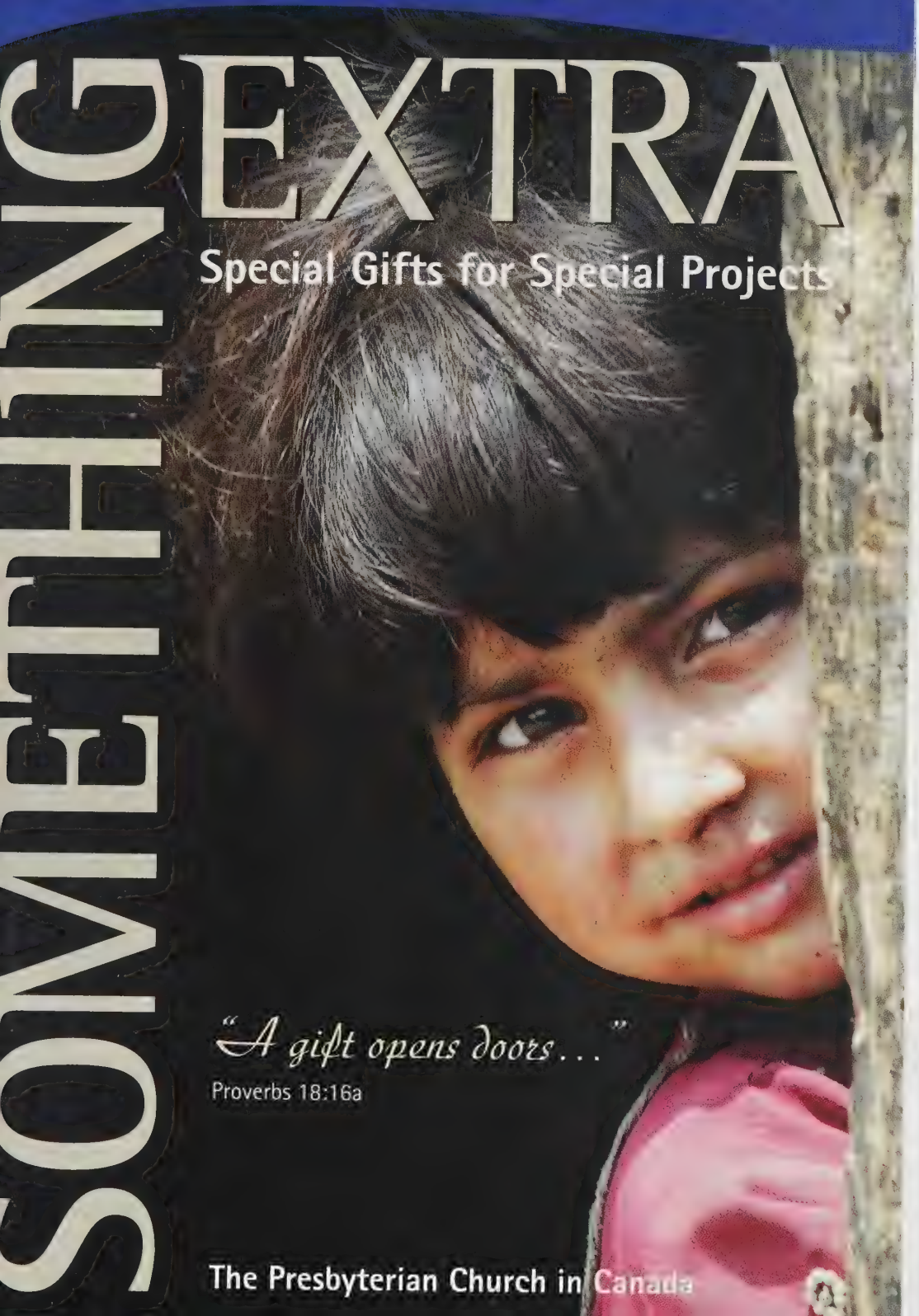
Your reason: _____

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Give a Gift that Matters!

SOMETHING EXTRA

Special Gifts for Special Projects



"A gift opens doors . . ."

Proverbs 18:16a

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Looking for the perfect gift? Give a gift that matters!

Your gifts to *Something Extra* will help The Presbyterian Church in Canada's partners reach out to those in need, in Canada and around the world. Make a donation as a Christmas, wedding, anniversary, birthday or memorial gift, and we will send the gift recipient a card in your name.

Your gift in any amount will make a difference. Specific costs given are based on past experience to give you an idea of what your donation can do. Our partners will use the funds for what is needed at the time to accomplish the project. If the project is completed, your gift will be used where most needed.

Fly a plane to Lhoosk'uz!

CM32

The remote village of Lhoosk'uz in the Cariboo region of British Columbia is a traditional Southern Carrier village where people live beyond the grid of power lines, phone lines and all the conveniences of modern life. Eager to worship and grow in faith, Lhoosk'uz elders invited Jon Wyminga, minister at Cariboo Presbyterian Church, to lead the community in worship, pastoral care and spiritual growth.



With no real road into the village, Jon joins a missionary pilot in a small plane to fly into the Lhoosk'uz community once a month to lead worship, visit with the people and encourage them in their faith. Through regular ministry, the village is being changed by the power of God as people find healing and empowerment through the gospel message, and experience the love of Christ's church.

$600 covers the cost of one flight into Lhoosk'uz

Build Christian community

CM03

Boarding Homes Ministry builds Christian community by linking residents of boarding homes with members of congregations. The ministry invites the people of our churches to hear God's call to form intimate communion with others. Residents of the homes have lived too long with rejection. They are waiting for their lives to be received and rejoiced over.

Your gift in any amount is greatly appreciated.

Help a child stay in school

CM29 Tyndale St-Georges Educational Development Program encourages elementary school-aged children to stay in school by showing them that education is a vital link to their future. Skills training helps enhance the children's ability to communicate effectively, work cooperatively and improve life skills. Specialized tutoring in core subject areas, supervised group homework, a study skills program and internet access help the children successfully complete school projects.

$7.50 buys ten erasers
$25 buys one text book
$42.50 buys five boxes of markers
$140 buys 75 rolls of scotch tape
$1200 buys one laptop computer



Provide dignity and compassion for refugees

CM31 It is called the Immigration Prevention Centre, but a double layer of razor wire atop a 20 foot fence, metal detectors, mounted surveillance cameras and guards make it seem more like a prison. It is here that refugees seeking Canada's protection are held. Action Réfugiés Montréal (ARM) staff visit the detention centre weekly to provide information on legal processes, help detainees contact lawyers and provide emotional support to traumatized people from conflicted regions all over the world. In some cases, a simple phone card is the key to obtaining essential identity documents from home and speaking to loved ones. Too often, ARM staff hear, "You are the first person to treat me as a human being."

$20 buys one phone card for a detainee
$50 helps staff visit and provide emotional support to a detainee through to their monthly detention review hearing
$100 offers a group training session on the refugee determination process
$400 covers weekly visits and follow-up for those who may spend weeks or months in detention



Send a teen to camp

IMGY01



At the Annual National Youth Camp in Guyana run by the Guyana Presbyterian Church, teens participate in daily bible study, leadership training, crafts, music, first aid training, drama and other exciting activities. Many campers are from very poor families and have no opportunity for leisure activities. The camp gives them an opportunity to leave hardship behind for a while, to swim, play games and interact with other Christians who help to affirm their beliefs. This experience helps young people to develop self-confidence and discipleship. The fruits of this ministry will multiply in church and society for a long time to come.

$40 allows one teen to attend the camp

Raise a church roof

IMMA04



The church in Malawi is growing so quickly that it is difficult to keep up with the need for meeting places. Building a church can take many months, sometimes years. All of the work is done by Christians. Foundations are dug out with pick axes and shovels. Bricks are shaped by hand and fired in ovens. Mortar is made from mud, sand and gravel. Aluminium for the roof cannot be made by hand, and costs more than most local people can afford. Your gift can help finish a church building in Malawi.

$6,000 – $8,000 builds a roof for a church in Malawi.
Your gift in **any amount** will help make a difference!

Buy a bike for an evangelist

IMKE01 (Kenya)
IMMA01 (Malawi)

In Kenya and Malawi, evangelists are the front line of the church's mission. They must travel considerable distances to teach and visit congregations in rural and remote areas. On foot, an evangelist can visit one congregation a week. With a bicycle, three or more congregations can be reached. Bicycles are an ideal means of transportation as they can be easily repaired and maintained. Your gift will help our partner churches in Africa purchase new bicycles and provide repairs for those already in use.



$80 buys one standard bicycle
$150 buys one mountain bike

Empower Mayan women

Years of civil war, discrimination and oppression have left Mayan women in Guatemala living in extreme poverty, emotionally and spiritually damaged. Through the *Fraternidad de Presbiteriales Mayas*, Mayan Presbyterian women come together to study the Bible and apply its teachings to their lives and communities. As the women see their value in God's sight, they can envision a better life and begin to work together on projects to improve life in their community. Funds are needed to pay for travel costs for workshop coordinators, Bible study materials and poverty fighting projects.



IMGU04

$100 covers the cost of bible study materials for one workshop

$300 – $500 covers all costs for one workshop

PWGU01

$20 helps a woman to join a handicraft group

$350 helps a women's group establish a garden plot

Work for a world without AIDS

PWHIV01

The AIDS crisis continues to grow, exacerbating existing emergencies, reversing development gains and creating new crises on a global scale. PCC partners in India, Malawi, Tanzania, Kenya and Canada are working hard to care for people living with HIV and AIDS. They are caring for the sick, supporting orphans and vulnerable children, working on prevention and fighting stigma and discrimination.

$10 pays for medical supplies for home-based care volunteers

$35 provides a bag of Likuni Phala, a high protein vitamin enriched food supplement, to children under the age of 5

$150 provides a bicycle for a home-based care volunteer

$950 covers housing and food subsidy costs for an orphan family for four months

$1000 trains volunteers to assist hospital staff in administering treatments to prevent the transmission of HIV from mother to child

$1440 provides the capital needed for a group income generating project





Educate a child

PWEDU01

Overcrowded classrooms; no books or school supplies; long hours caring for younger siblings; washing car windshields; or selling pop in the streets – these are a few of the obstacles young people around the world face in their quest for learning. From helping kids in refugee camps go to school to offering classes at special times for working children PWS&D programs help vulnerable children get an education.

$43 covers secondary school fees for one month for a student from the Shauri Yako Youth Centre in Kenya

$42 helps a middle school student at the Francisco Coll School in Guatemala pay for a uniform, school fees, supplies and bus fare for one month

$50 provides school supplies for one month for children attending night school in India

Provide clean water

PWH2O

One in six people do not have access to even the most basic requirement of life: clean water. Every 14 seconds a person dies from a water-borne disease such as dysentery, typhoid and cholera. Women and children spend hours a day fetching water, leaving little time for school or work. PWS&D partners are working to improve access to clean water in many ways. Special machinery drills deep boreholes (35+m) in remote communities. Large tanks collect rainwater from the roofs of schools and houses. Water is trucked in to camps for refugees. Workshops educate communities on hygiene and water-borne diseases.

$128 trains one person in borehole care and maintenance in Malawi

$4,000 helps construct a rainwater tank in Tanzania

$3,000 – $10,000 helps drill a borehole in a remote village or following an emergency*

*Note: the depth of the well, the cost of geophysical studies and drilling, and the number of training and water sanitation workshops required can significantly affect the cost per well.



Invest in a business, invest in life

PWMZ03

The "Caixa das Mulheres de Nampula" is a savings and credit union for low-income women in poverty-stricken northern Mozambique. The Caixa provides women who do not have access to financial services with a safe place to deposit their money. It also provides training on how to start small businesses – in their own language. Small loans provide the capital needed to begin or expand their businesses. Over the last two years loan repayments have been higher than 98%!

$10 buys a passbook for a woman to open a bank account for the first time

$100 trains a woman on how to take out a loan and start a small business

$500 provides an average-sized loan to help a woman start a small business.



Help women fight poverty

PWIN02

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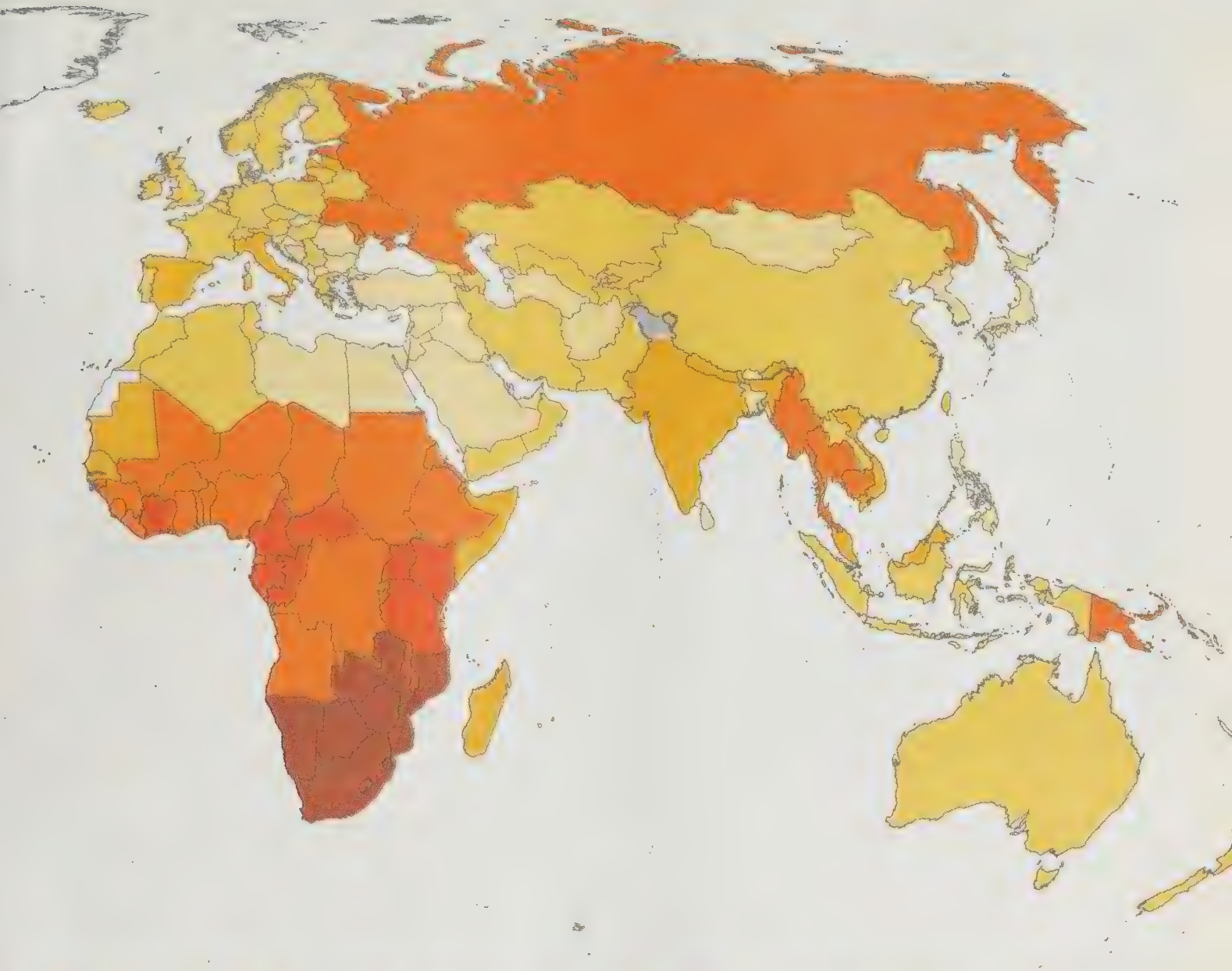
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This *Something Extra* supplement complements the *Something Extra* booklet produced in November 2005. For a full listing of projects and project updates go to www.presbyterian.ca/mission/somethingextra.

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A global view of HIV infection

39 million people [33 – 46 million] living with HIV, 2005

Sixty-five million people have been infected with HIV/AIDS since it was first diagnosed in 1981. Over 25 million have died. In 2005, some 2.8 million died from AIDS-related diseases and over four million were newly infected. Two-thirds of all those living with HIV are in sub-Sahara Africa, where 24.5 million are infected. The majority of those of who have the virus (HIV) are unaware of their positive status. UNAIDS, a coalition of United Nations programs addressing HIV/AIDS, calls it "one of the greatest security and development issues facing the world today."

'If HIV/AIDS opens the door for the church in any way, if we combat everything we know that is associated with HIV/AIDS with compassion, then that is positive'

Calvin may have contracted the virus through a blood transfusion after an operation. Or through sexual activity. He's not sure and he won't say either way. Though he knows the difference between the two: it's the difference between innocence and guilt. He knows it is the difference between pastoral prayers from the pulpit bearing his name, and shunning; between pastoral visits from his fellows in the pews, and judgmental stares. He knows that if he had cancer, or some other condition that was not wrapped with sexuality and guilt, his name would be uttered openly in prayers.

Instead Calvin takes refuge in the handful who do know, who do provide pastoral care (these do not include his current minister), who do love him as a servant of Christ. He is old enough to have seen the world change—he remembers the debate over the ordination of women. He compares the debate surrounding human sexuality to the attitudes once held towards those who were left-handed.

At the end of Christo Greyling's workshop on stigma, Dr. Hubert Maquette, of Haiti, stood up and delivered a passionate denunciation of sin. Interviewed later he said, "If we do not talk about sin then we are no longer the church."

Maquette gives the example of the woman who is to be stoned. Christ stops the stoning by challenging the gathered to judge their own guilt. That is, Christ says, we are all broken, and not one of us has the right to judge others. But then, as Maquette points out, Christ, in sending the woman away, tells her, "Go and sin no more."

Sin, for Maquette, is at the heart of Christianity; and he acknowledges that this theological interpretation will cause a divide between the northern and the southern church.

Greyling for his part was not pleased with Maquette's outburst, but, ironically, it's the sort of thing that keeps him vigilant. For years he's been traveling the world holding sensitivity workshops on stigma. "Sometimes I think I've done my part but then doing workshops, I see the conversion in people and I realize my job isn't finished yet."

"The Presbyterian Church in Canada is getting it," says Karen Plater. Over the past two years the church's Towards A World Without AIDS project has exceeded expectations. First raised as a challenge by then-moderator Rev. Richard Fee, the campaign continues. "I have often been surprised by the unique and creative ways local churches are raising funds, and educating themselves about this crisis," she said.

Plater is one of the hardest-working people in the church. As the resource and communications coordinator for PWS&D she is in contact with many local churches. She has traveled the world and witnessed the work of many partner agencies. She leads mission tours to these locations and was chair of the Christian Host Committee that helped organize the mostly Christian conference. She is an indispensable force within the church, having witnessed the pandemic from many different points of view.

"In the beginning we didn't want to talk about HIV/AIDS because we didn't want to talk about sex. But, I have seen church groups talk about sexuality, HIV, condoms.

"If HIV challenges us as a church to look at the way we look at marginalized people, how we look at anybody in society, if HIV/AIDS opens the door for the church in any way, if we combat everything we know that is associated with HIV/AIDS with compassion, then that is positive."

Check your bias

Part 3 of 3

A little bit more information has come out about all three that may help you further.

CHARLES

- both he and Dennis have successful careers and are wealthy

SALLY

- she has no medical assistance
- she has no savings to secure her future
- so, she still works as a receptionist at the escort agency

NOMSA

- lost her job because HIV+
- husband's policy paid out $32,000 US
- invited to invest money in daughter's business

Your choice for the one to receive the anti-viral medication: _____

Your reason: _____

Now go back through your three answers: did you leave your bias behind? In each scenario what concepts drove your decision? Sexuality, profession, wealth? Any others?
Share this exercise with friends and family, try it at coffee hour this Sunday.

COURTESY OF ANERELA+ AND WORLD VISION

BEATRICE'S STORY



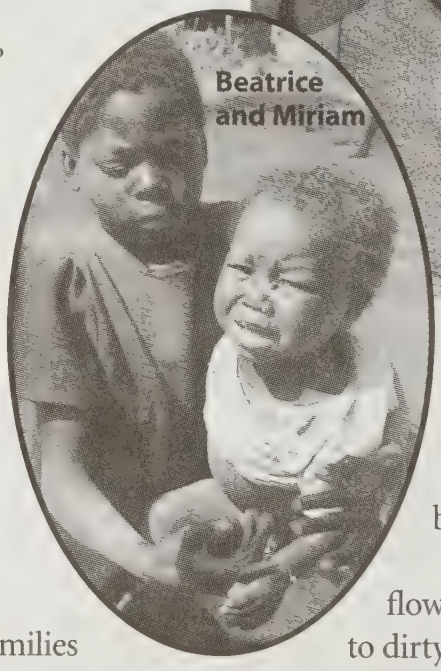
Beatrice is seven years old. She lives in Zambia. She loves to run and play around the mud-brick houses with grass-thatched roofs.

Even though she is amongst the 90 per cent of Zambians who live on less than two dollars a day, she is still a fun-loving little girl.

But a carefree life has a short run in Beatrice's world. Twenty per cent of children die before the age of five.

Beatrice's mother died a few years ago. Her teenage sister, who is pregnant by a husband who has already left her, is raising Beatrice.

By the time Beatrice hears the thin, persistent wail of her newborn niece, she has lost her sister due to complications arising during the delivery.



Beatrice and Miriam

The maternal mortality rate in Zambia is amongst the highest in the world due to malaria, malnourishment, poverty and HIV/AIDS.

Miriam, the newborn, cries and coos, her arms waving in the air. But nobody reaches for her. In a village filled with single mothers and grandmothers caring for their own families there is no one left for Miriam.

Seven-year-old Beatrice decides she will "take her."

The days are consumed with scavenging food. Miriam cries a lot. She likes to lie in Beatrice's lap; she wants to be carried. She doesn't like being left alone. Abandoned by her own family, Beatrice understands Miriam's needs.

This is just another child-headed household in Africa—a phenomenon growing dramatically across the continent.

Miriam does not get bigger like other babies. Her arms and legs get thinner, her skin starts peeling, her hair grows in patches. Fleas infest her fingernails and toes. There are open bleeding sores.

Beatrice cannot go to school like the other children in the village. The villagers keep their distance from her, keep their children from her. They cannot afford to care; they have their own burdens.

Miriam's eyes become infected, pus flowing regularly. Beatrice has access only to dirty water in the village.

Surprisingly Miriam survives to her second birthday but she still cannot sit up by herself. The years have beaten Beatrice as well. They are hungry, so hungry, and cold, in desperate need of nourishment and medical care.

This story has a happy ending, of sorts. A nurse from a faith-based organization finds this little mother and child.

Of sorts: Despite Beatrice's extraordinary survival instinct her life is surrounded by a silent curse. Her mother died of AIDS; Miriam's father died of AIDS.

Despite this legacy, the open sores, the fetid water, the little girls are not infected. Their story is a miracle. For now.

– Courtesy World Vision—One Life Experience.

Beatings, hugs, shunning

How do we deal with sin in church and state?

BY CALVIN BROWN



The media has made much of the Conservative government's promise to crack down on violent crime and impose mandatory sentencing on perpetrators. The arguments in the press usually focus on whether the proposal is just a bunch of smoke and mirrors or whether it will be effective in stopping violent crime.

A deeper issue is to examine the purpose of our actions following a transgression. Is it mainly to provide punishment as a deterrent or is it to work with the perpetrators to rehabilitate them and bring them back into the community as respected and contributing members?

If the real objective is to provide a deterrent then locking people away is not very effective, as many serious studies have shown. If the object is to terrify observers not to fall into the same temptation, I suppose a public flogging would be much more effective. The idea of the same mandatory punishment for certain crimes, while having the veneer of equality, fails to take into account the particular circumstances involved. A wise judge, using discretion, can be discerning so that the punishment fits the particular circumstance connected to the crime within broader parameters.

Mandatory sentencing sounds good to those who are looking for an easy answer without looking to the reality of real people in real circumstances. Mandatory sentencing is about keeping people in institutions. If the Conservative policy is vigorously applied, the resulting costs to operate prisons (currently approximately $85,000 a year for every inmate) will draw funds away from social programs, like improved education, health care and those addressing child poverty, which reduce crime. Incarceration is poor stewardship of both money and human resources. I suspect if we took that amount of money and promised to pay it to the inmates in monthly installments if they kept away from crime we would have a better result than we have now. Our current trend is wasteful and lazy. It takes neither faith nor imagination to simply lock them up and throw away the key.

In the church as well, when people are caught up in a transgression we tend to follow the ways of the world. We defrock them and toss them out of the community rather than do anything to rehabilitate them. I am not advocating that those who transgress get off scot-free. The consequences we impose now are not ones that lead to openness and rehabilitation but to long-term debilitation. What I propose is a more intensive community involvement. What if instead of tossing people away we recycled them? What if we took the considerable resources already expended, and applied them to rehabilitation instead of punishment? There will always be a need to keep the public safe and there may be some perpetrators who are unable or unwilling to work for their own rehabilitation—for them we would keep a few spaces in institutions where they would be kept separate from the community.

For fallen clergy or for others there would be a commission (in the secular community it could be a support committee made up of professionals and volunteers) to whom the perpetrator would be accountable. The one being rehabilitated would not simply be flung to his/her own resources but, depending on the degree of seriousness and possible threat to the community, there would be a gradual increase in freedom that corresponded to the growing sense of rehabilitation.

Mandatory sentencing sounds good to those who are looking for an easy answer without looking to the reality of real people in real circumstances

The covenant would include all areas of the person's social life, training, treatment and anything else felt to be relevant. The commission would act as a mentor and encourager for a new life, and bring healing and help for transgressors to develop their God-given gifts and become a productive part of their community.

Especially in the church we need to go after the sinners and bring them back to the fold. What I'm urging is restorative justice which is described by the Church Council on Justice and Corrections as "one of a wide range of emerging justice approaches that aim for more healing and satisfying responses to crime. While each approach is different, these processes try to give active participation to those directly involved or affected. Together they sort out matters of accountability, safety and the need for a fair and meaningful course of action."

Rev. Calvin Brown is executive director of Renewal Fellowship. http://renewalfellowship.presbyterian.ca

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Wrestling with a crisis

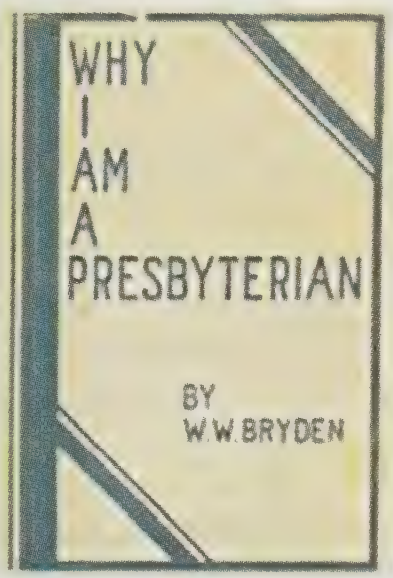
John Visser's biography of Walter Bryden is an important book for our times

BY RICHARD TOPPING

The Neo-orthodox Theology of W.W. Bryden
By John Vissers
Princeton Theological Monograph Series
Pickwick Publications

The Principal of Presbyterian College opens his book on Walter Bryden with a fight scene at General Assembly; well, almost a fight scene. On the one side, Dr. Bryden, Principal of Knox College, on the other, Dr. Stuart C. Parker, Minister of St. Andrew's Simcoe Street, Toronto. The provocation for this almost altercation was a lecture on the Westminster Confession of Faith. After listening to Bryden for almost two hours, Parker had to be restrained. Although Bryden did not advocate naïve confessionalism (he didn't regard the Westminster Standards as "once for all" statements of faith), Parker was enraged that Bryden would look to this historical document to buoy up the current life and witness of the church. Parker was "intercepted" before he got to Bryden. It is possible to imagine that on the other side of the sanctuary of St. Paul's, Hamilton, Ont., another equally enraged delegate had to be held back. This person, shaking a copy of the confession at Bryden, was aghast that he could speak of the provisional nature of the Westminster Confession of Faith. On the one side of the sanctuary, delegates hold back Parker, the liberal clergyman raging against the irrelevance of historic confessions. On the other side of the sanctuary, a confessionalist restrained, held back from playing the pugilist with a speaker, who had offered a critical assessment of the truths of the Gospel "once and for all" inscribed.

Take this vastly oversimplified scene as a summary of Visser's sophisticated genetic account of the life and work of Walter Bryden. Over the course of his long tenure in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, first as congregational minister, and then as professor and principal at Knox College (1925-1952), Bryden searched for the middle path between theological liberalism and theological conservatism.



On the one side, theological liberalism, as Bryden saw it, accommodated itself too readily to the thought forms of the day. Once applied, the solvent of philosophical idealism dissolved God into a rational principle unfolding in history, Jesus into an exemplar with the highest religious and moral consciousness and the human predicament as one settled by development. Bryden rejected theological liberalism in this form, and as Vissers notes, thereby identified himself with a large early-20th-century theological protest called neo-orthodoxy. In contrast with the reigning liberal theology of his time, Bryden, deploying the resources he mined from neo-orthodox theology, especially Karl Barth, and drawing on the moderate Calvinism to which his British teachers had introduced him, emphasized above all else the definitive revelation of God in the Judging-Saving Word, Jesus Christ. (What student of Bryden could forget that formulation?) Vissers finds similarities, "a family resemblance," between important neo-orthodox theologians at this point, but also notes that neo-orthodoxy is by no means a homogenous school. Moreover, through his genetic treatment of the development of Bryden's thought, Vissers opens a venue on important influences on Bryden besides Barth. And finally, Vissers helps us to understand that Bryden's objections to Church Union were rooted in his critique, fortified by Barth and neo-orthodoxy, of philosophical idealism. Bryden wasn't willing to accept at face value the notion that Union was a natural unfolding in history, and he objected to the absence of theological warrant for the move.

Bryden, while rejecting the over-determination of Christian theology by modern thought forms, was no obscurantist. Vissers notes that Bryden "knew he could not simply embrace old orthodoxies," that the neo-orthodox impulse that Bryden followed sought to overthrow liberalism not by going around modern thought, "but [by] going through it" and that Bryden deployed a "modern theological method." Bryden, for example, did not repudiate historical-critical inquiry—although he did note that searches for the historical Jesus tended to project into the texts what they wished to find. Hence with Barth, Bryden maintained that historical

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Bryden needed to distinguish his treatment of the Holy Spirit from liberal Protestant theology in which the Holy Spirit and the human spirit were often descriptively confluent

critics ought to be more critical. Bryden distanced himself from fundamentalist (Protestant Orthodox) views of revelation as propositions on the pages of the Bible. Bryden articulated a more dynamic view of revelation as encounter with the free sovereign word of God through the Spirit of God. Experience of God, in Bryden's thought, was always self-authenticating, as in Calvin, and not subject to the approval of human reason, as in liberal Protestantism. Vissers' highlighting of Bryden's doctrine of the Spirit in the knowledge of God is particularly welcome and, on Bryden's part, crucial. For Bryden needed to distinguish his treatment of the Holy Spirit from liberal Protestant theology in which the Holy Spirit and the human spirit were often descriptively confluent.

We owe a debt to John Vissers for this interesting and well-written account of an important figure in the recent history of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The sense of crisis that hovers in the background and motivates Bryden's rearticulation of theology feels a lot like our own time. Important theological books now describe our time and the theology being done as post-liberal. The figure of Karl Barth looms large in this movement. My worry is that in our current crisis, of identity and attendance, instead of engaging in critical theological work that mines the sources and reads the Bible and turns to God, we will happily adopt marketing language whole hog, and continue to talk about audiences, do needs assessments and strategic planning (talk about ourselves) and not talk very much about God at all. Vissers' book on Bryden is about wrestling with God in a crisis; would that no one would "intercept" us on our way to the match.

Richard Topping is minister at St Andrew and St. Paul, Montreal.

He's dead but he won't lie down

Bryden calls out a challenge to the church today

BY STUART COLES

This is a top-notch piece of historical scholarship. But it leaves me haunted by a disquieting question—so what?

The book evaluates Bryden insightfully and highly as a prophetic presence and a dynamic teacher across the second quarter of the 20th century. But Vissers seems constrained to leave that life and that work lying in the past tense. I write these lines for two reasons:

- I agree with Vissers' discernment of the Bryden years as a healthful, productive era in our post-1925 history, but the subsequent decades as a slide into denominational decrepitude and spiritual retrogression.
- This thoughtful re-visiting of those Bryden years stirs me to a rambunctious hope that that story might energize us into action—might serve to rekindle the dwindling fire of our life as a denomination.

The drift of churches into decadence and insignificance seems widespread; our diminution as a church is not isolated. Douglas Hall and others make it clear the times they are a-changing: the centuries-old seductive liaison between the church and whichever empire is currently dominant—Christendom—is facing senility and dissolution.

When I ask around for clues to the shape of the post-Christendom church, I do not get reassuring advice. One prestigious recommendation was David Ford of Cambridge University; he has edited a wide-ranging compilation, *Twentieth-Century Theologians*. It is an impressive potpourri of possibilities—but it leaves my question unanswered. It fails to provide any trustworthy pointers toward a post-Christendom future for faith.

Ford does present a clutch of Twelve Theses for 21st-century Christian theology; six of these deal with questions of principle—Who For? What For? Why? The other six are instrumental on the How question. But there's a disqualifying absence: there is no fire in the vision. Ford, in effect, fractures the backbone of the biblical vision: "Behold then the goodness and the severity of God." (Romans 11) Ford makes a cuddlesome case for God's goodness, but seems to be deaf to dark realities such as the Stalinist and Nazi holocausts and now the cancerous consumerist totalitarianism of the American empire.

The centuries-old seductive liaison between the church and whichever empire is currently dominant–Christendom–is facing senility and dissolution

A more authentic access to a future for Christianity, oddly enough, is the bumpy, danger-minded road spotlighted by the Presbyterian World Alliance (WARC): Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth. (Dirty words like economy and consumerism don't smudge Ford's syllabus.)

WARC: "The signs of the times have become more alarming and must be interpreted. The root causes of massive threats to life are above all the product of an unjust economic system defended and protected by political and military might."

Walter Bryden, as Vissers notes, was a caring, nurturing teacher; but he was not a cuddlesome personality to deal with. He was a man on fire—on fire with "the judging-saving Word of God." He anticipated the WARC challenge with a prophet's insight: in his time he diagnosed and denounced "the banker mentality" which is now so widely entrenched in our church as well as our culture (for example, in our trustee investment policies) as to be all-controlling. We are a dying religion and it is our adoption of false gods that is killing us in a faith community.

A proposal: Walter Bryden was ordained in 1909. Among the sources of his dynamism and his impact as a theological teacher was his exploration of the communal and economic innovations pioneered by John Calvin who was born in 1509. That duplex fact prompts me to propose that our presbyteries and congregations launch a process of re-igniting our candlesticks as a faith community, looking to 2009 as the 500th anniversary of Calvin's birth and the 100th anniversary of Bryden's ordination.

How? Ask the History Committee, the Life and Mission Agency, the WMS and the *Presbyterian Record* to promote the circulation and study of Vissers' book on Bryden alongside study/action attention to the WARC challenge; enlisting Justice Ministries, Education For Discipleship, the Ecumenical Relations, Church Doctrine and Theological Education Committees of Assembly, the Canadian Society for Presbyterian History, A New Network, the Churches' Council on Theological Education and the Toronto Journal of Theology, as facilitators/agents provocateurs.

Stuart Coles is a retired minister in Toronto.

BUILDING HOPE

Did you know?

In 1962, two deaconesses of the Presbyterian Church ran a summer vacation bible school in Winnipeg's inner city. The response was overwhelming. Through the generosity of the WMS, a permanent building was purchased. It was known as Flora House and its ministry was dedicated to inner city children and teens.

Later, in 1964, a second inner city mission was started, called Anishinabe Fellowship Centre. It ministered to the needs of primarily Aboriginal people.

Both these Missions and their Boards worked devotedly over the next 45 years to develop programs and supports for children, families and individuals.

WICM

In 2002, the two boards amalgamated to form one organization called Winnipeg Inner City Missions of the Presbyterian Church in Canada or WICM.

Today, WICM serves over 850 families at Anishinabe Fellowship Centre and approximately 550 families at Flora House.

Winnipeg Inner City Missions Of The Presbyterian Church In Canada

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Winnipeg, MB R3C 4A7

Flora House 204-586-5494

Anishinabe Fellowship Centre
204-942-8682

book review

A profound theology

Probing the history of the heart of Canadian Presbyterianism

BY KENNETH BARKER

No Small Jewel: A History Of the Synod Of Southwestern Ontario
By John S. Moir, Geoffrey D. Johnston, and Joseph C. McLelland

Resist the temptation to dismiss this book as nothing more than a parochial history of Presbyterianism in southwestern Ontario. Since the old Synod of Hamilton-London has long been one of the strongest in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, its history involves an examination of Canadian Presbyterianism on the wider scene.

The authors carefully describe the difficult struggle to establish a Presbyterian witness in British North America following the American Revolution. They highlight the evangelical revival, which changed the outlook within the Church of Scotland, brought the Glasgow Colonial Society into existence and provided spiritual assistance to many settlers who migrated to British North America in the 18th century. Moreover they portray the strange combination of unity and diversity that characterized Canadian Presbyterianism before and after the great union of 1875. There has frequently been vigorous theological debate among Presbyterians.

However, had it not been for the numerical, financial and theological strength of southwestern Ontario, the history of the continuing Presbyterian Church in Canada would probably have been significantly different from what it turned out to be. The percentage of people who remained with the denomination in southwestern Ontario following 1925 was well above the national average. By the time the dust had settled in 1928, membership in the area stood at 63 per cent of what it had been in 1924.

The theological direction of the church was also strongly influenced by the area. Walter Bryden, born on a farm near Galt, came to Knox College in 1927 and inspired a significant number of students until his death in 1952. Although Bryden came to terms with critical Biblical scholarship, he is remembered as one who "stood in the evangelical tradition." He and many of the ministers from southwestern Ontario were also at the forefront of the debate which led to a major challenge of the Westminster Confession of Faith's stand on the relationship of church and state. In the light of Hitler's rule in Nazi Germany, should the church ever offer unconditional support to any state or culture?

The latter part of the book, including the probing epilogue by Joseph C. McLelland, comes to terms with the numerical decline of the denomination in recent years and the reduction of its cultural influence. To quote McLelland, "If it sounds trite to say that Christianity is at a crossroads in this age of pluralism, secularism and social licentiousness, it remains true that we need to study our past for its valid truths and its perennial wisdom. We need to take stock of our assets—our profound theology, our missionary spirit, our commitment to doing things decently and in order."

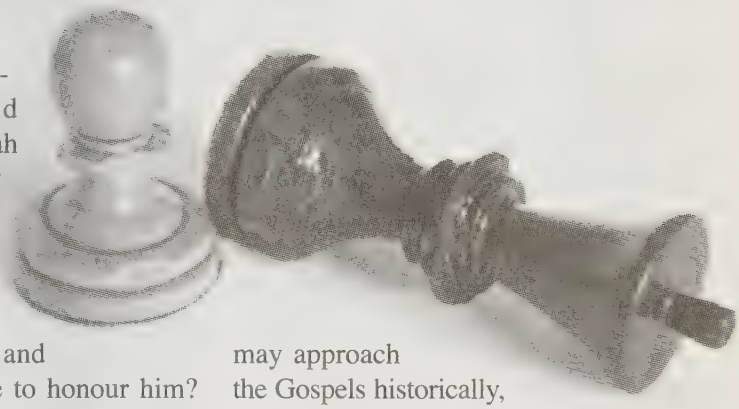
The editor candidly admits that the whole story has not been told in this book. Hopefully it will stimulate further research and writing, including histories of other synods. Yet *No Small Jewel* is no small contribution to a worthy project. In the providence of God it may do more than recount accomplishments of the past; it may stimulate a vigorous future.

Rev. Kenneth Barker is a minister in Owen Sound, Ont.

The alethiometer of adolescence

Helping youth discover the truth

BY BLAIR BERTRAND



Philip Pullman in his young adult fantasy series *His Dark Materials* introduces the protagonist Lyra Belacqua to the alethiometer, a golden compass-like object that takes its name from the Greek for truth. The alethiometer can allow its user to discern the truth, but only if the user is skilled in its use. As a girl on the cusp of puberty, Lyra displays an extraordinary gift for using the alethiometer. This intuitive ability disappears with a kiss; when Lyra becomes a sexual being, she can no longer see the truth through the alethiometer. She must relearn the discernment, spending countless hours studying and practicing something that once came so easily to her.

Lyra is like all adolescents. The tools that served us well as children suddenly don't work so well when faced with the changes we undergo in our metamorphoses into young adults. The way that we make meaning changes as we change and so what was once familiar and intuitive is alien and difficult. When we approach texts such as the Bible, we approach them with a different compass than we once did and therefore we read them differently.

Take the story of David. As children we tend to focus on David and Goliath, of the small triumphing over the big, of good versus evil, of the role that God can play in children's lives. All of these things are true but teens know that the small doesn't always triumph over the big. They wonder where God is when the big wins out. They ask questions of theodicy because they want to understand how God allows evil to exist, specifically the evil they experience in their own lives. Looking at the whole David story rather than a snippet, teens also wonder about another man that David kills. What about Uriah who David indirectly slays so that he can sleep with his wife? Where does the line of love and lust get drawn in David's life and how can God continue to honour him? Parents may read David's relationship with Absalom through the lens of their own successes and failures at parenting while teens might read it in reverse. Absalom is the rebellious teen who is trying to figure out what he should do in the world. Teens may wonder what is so wrong with that? In all of these teen readings, the truth is stranger than it used to be.

Developmental psychology partly explains this different way of reading. Developmentally, adolescence is a time when we look for intimacy, for our role in the world and for some sort of thought system that can make sense of it all. As Christians we might phrase these three quests as the search for intimacy, vocation and beliefs. Teens want to know and be known intimately by another, whether that other is a lover or God. Finding something to do, something that has value and gives meaning to life is the search for vocation. All relationships and actions must fit together in a semi-coherent set of beliefs that make sense of what the world is about and how it works.

When teens approach the Bible, they do so with these three quests for truth in mind and heart. Children and adults, ministers and scholars all search for different forms of truth in the Bible, forms of truth shaped by who they are developmentally. For instance, adult scholars may approach the Gospels historically, asking, "What did Jesus actually say?" For scholars, the alethiometer would point to the bare historical facts of who, where, what, when and why. For teens the question is, "What do the words of Jesus have to say to me?" The alethiometer points them to subtle personal truths embedded in the text. "I really like this person, but do I really love them?" wonders a teen looking for help. "Can the Bible help me understand what it is to love and be loved in my world?" "I want to know whether I should take academic or applied math because I really want to know what I should do with my life," says the teen at Bible study. "Can I discern God's will for my life in the Bible?" "How can the Bible make sense of the death of my friend?" inquires a teen at a memorial service. How does the Bible make sense of all of life, both the highs and the lows, the extremes and the mundane?

As teens move out of childhood into adulthood, we have a responsibility as the church to help them relearn how to use the alethiometer. Truth is still there, it is just in a different place.

Rev. Blair Bertrand is the associate minister for children, youth and families at St. Andrew's, Brampton, Ont. This is the second of three articles, the first of which appeared last month in the CY06 coverage.

PHOTO: ©ISTOCKPHOTO.COM/CHRISTOPH ERMEL

Finding God in our lives

A women-only retreat helped her find the stillness in her life

BY KAREN LATIMER



'Women who can openly show faith have a big impact on younger women.'

I am not a retreat kind of a person. At least, that is what I thought before my recent experience at the Presbyterian Women's Weekend Retreat at Camp Kannawin. Located on Sylvan Lake in central Alberta this retreat gave me a safe and beautiful environment to explore my own spirituality. I learned how to express my faith and it helped me find ways to incorporate worship into my daily life. The theme was taken from Psalm 103:1: "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name." By looking at my gifts and then exploring new avenues for personal and congregational worship, I finally understood that by engaging in active worship on a daily basis, I can inspire others.

Our spiritual guide, Rev. Helen Smith, said the purpose of the retreat was to provide a chance "to get away, try something new and different in an environment of peace, to be able to reflect on the presence of God in our lives." She used a quilt as a metaphor for the importance of spirituality; the binding represents the horizontal relationships we have with friends and family, while the stuffing represents the vertical relationship we have with God; it fills us and gives us shape. Lois Snider-Norby worked with Rev. Helen to develop the weekend program. She emphasized the opportunity for the women to "renew, refresh and re-centre" by leaving free time between sessions for individual reflection and chances to connect with other participants. Lois indicated that this is an important part of the experience because by sharing with others, we can learn from their experiences.

I have never been overtly Christian. I have always believed, but I never took ownership of my faith. This retreat gave me the chance to look inward and discover the power that I had within me. After I spent time in the Spirituality Centre, where I travelled through the Labyrinth with no great inspiration, I took some of the study sheets to the outdoor chapel. It was one of our beautiful spring days where the blue sky stretched forever. From the chapel, I could hear the wind in the trees and the sound of the water hitting rocks on the shore. I stopped and just drank it all in. Suddenly, I had the feeling that I had to act, so I started pulling weeds from around the cross. It was there, on my knees that I felt God's presence. I also realized that the restlessness I have been feeling for a long time was Him all along. Now that I have acknowledged Him, I have a calmness I have never felt before. The atmosphere at the retreat gave me the chance to be still long enough to let God speak to me. Luckily, because I was at camp, I had people near me who understood how I felt and were thrilled to share the experience with me.

When I got home, I shared this incredible experience with my minister, Rev. Fiona Wilkinson. In her experiences, she has found that "women who can openly show faith have a big impact on younger women." I now feel more comfortable in expressing my own faith. It did have a big impact on me. This inter-generational connection was apparent at our retreat. At the beginning, we tended to gravitate towards other women our own age, but by the end, most of us felt like we were 12-years-old so it did not matter.

Because of the retreat, I have a new perspective on worship styles. It provided an opportunity for me to compare worship styles not only between large and small churches or urban and rural locations, but also between the young and old. It was interesting to talk about how to incorporate traditional and contemporary aspects into congregational worship. It was also interesting to learn how many older women want contemporary aspects of worship while some younger ones want to maintain tradition.

The goal of a retreat, of course, is not to find the one answer, but to share ideas to try in individual congregations. These new ideas help women in their leadership roles in their churches and communities. I know I have come back physically, emotionally and spiritually rested and ready to serve and bless His holy name.

Karen Latimer is an Alberta writer.

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Day of rejoicing (not!)

It's tough to be brave and manly as tears stream down your cheeks

My son Stephen has enrolled in Prairie Bib College, a decision that has his mother and me rejoicing and sniffling and clutching our wallets all at once. The price for Bible college has not decreased since I attended in the latter half of the last century, but I assured him it would not be a problem. We would sell his little brother into slavery to pay for the first semester.*



Bible college wasn't on my agenda for this boy. I've checked *Fortune 500* and *Money* magazine. There are very few ministers, missionaries and camp directors listed there. I will reach retirement age in 22 years. Who will pay for my medication?

On Monday, Stephen's mother kissed his cheek and I hugged him until his kidneys hurt. He didn't seem to mind. There were no tears in his eyes, and certainly none in mine. In fact, I couldn't have been happier. It was a holiday. The sky was blue. The air was warm. The clouds were non-threatening. I would go home and hoist a ginger ale then cut the grass. As I pushed our old weed whacker along, I considered all the reasons I was happy to have this kid out of the house. These were just a start:

- No more toothpaste on our bathroom door.
- No more mould growing beneath his bed.
- His music can keep someone else up now.
- I can find my ties, my tools and my remote control.
- No more stepping in remnants of last night's yogurt snack.
- Or tripping over clothes on the floor.
- We will save roughly $4,000 per month on groceries.
- No more adjusting the seat and mirror when I drive the car.
- No more phone calls interrupting my work: "Dad, let's go golfing."
- No more flopping on our bed at night to tell us of his day.
- I was free.

Monday night we crawled into bed, my wife and I, the lawn neatly trimmed, the house cleaned, the back porch swept and she said: "Aren't you glad Stephen wants to serve God? We've prayed that he would since he was knee-high to a Lego block." How could I disagree? I started on my list of 10 things, but Ramona had drifted off already, so I lay there with my hands behind my thinning hairdo gazing up at the stippled ceiling. The smile had subsided a little. It wasn't like I'd been baptized in lemon juice, but you get the picture.

Most nights Stephen brushes his teeth outside our bedroom door. If the door is open, he comes in. Boys are easy to talk to when there's toothpaste in their mouth. Suddenly I missed those talks. I missed him thumping down the stairs and pretending he wiped out, just to see the horrified looks on our faces. I missed the music he would crank up about 11 p.m. in the room below us. Even if it sounded like someone killing chickens with a jackhammer. I missed him rolling on the floor with the dog and sometimes me and standing at the fridge together about midnight talking of our day and wondering where Mom hid the mayonnaise. Even the dog misses him. I went looking for Mojo tonight. She was lying on Stephen's bed, her tail in the downward position. And try as I might to be brave and manly and a positive thinker Robert H. Schuller would admire, there were tears coming down my cheeks there in the dark.

I know there are far worse things than hugging your firstborn goodbye as he goes off to Bible college, but I miss my son.

"Lord," I prayed, "take care of this boy. I know he was on loan, but we got pretty attached to him. Wherever he is and wherever he goes, go with him." And I thanked God that he lent us two more kids. I'm so glad they're around. They're bright kids. I think they'll make good lawyers. They can buy my medication.

** Phil is joking. He did not sell his son. Please do not write him letters about this.*

Phil Callaway is a speaker and the bestselling author of 17 books. Visit him online at www.philcallaway.com

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Eaglemaniacs

'We have seen the enemy and he is us'

BY DAVID WEBBER

Don't get me wrong, it's not that I don't like bald eagles as a species, I just don't care for their personalities. They tend to be eaglemaniacs. Let me give you a case in point.

In the spring, the road between our place and Williams Lake is the site of a tragic number of road kills, mostly mule deer. Every morning all the scavengers line up at the road kill café for their turn to lick the pot. About a year ago, one Sunday we pulled out onto the road and headed to church in Williams Lake. Down the road a few kilometres a large immature eagle was on a road-killed deer together with a bunch of ravens, crows and magpies. As we bore down upon the scene like a preacher bound for heaven, our cold roaring diesel motor frightened the birds off the kill. The prudent ravens, crows and magpies quickly scattered away from the road. The egotistical eagle confidently swooped off of the bank right down in front of us and proceeded to fly away from us using the highway as his runway to gain elevation. The only problem was he had a belly full of deer and was barely able to claw enough air to get airborne. He was doing about 10 km/h just above the pavement and we were a little late for church, which means we were doing about 120 km/h. I think you can get the picture. The young eagle certainly didn't because he was so confident in himself that he didn't even look over his shoulder. We soon had a real close up view of the nasty end of an eagle. Just before we rear-ended him he moved over just enough to allow me to take radical tire-squealing-horn-hollering evasive action. The eagle continued on down the road as though it was engineered and constructed for him alone. "Eaglemaniac!" I shouted.



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As I said, it's not that I don't like bald eagles, I just don't care for their personalities. They are truly noble-looking birds, I'll give you that. And yet, the late U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt, an avid naturalist among many other things, argued for the grizzly bear to be the national emblem of his country rather than the bald eagle. Roosevelt reasoned the bald eagle to be just another scavenger bird, no more magnificent in character than the likes of the turkey buzzard, the raven or even the common seagull. Though this will no doubt get both Teddy and me into a whole pail of bird doo-doo, it's true. The bald eagle is not a true bird of prey like the red-tailed hawk, osprey, sparrow hawk or for that matter, the

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What is promised in making purchases is often the very thing that people have historically sought through their faith; spiritual stuff like peace, freedom, serenity and contentment

golden eagle, all who hunt and take their own prey. And yet, the bald eagle acts like it is the lion king of the sky, like it is a bird unto itself. Unlike true birds of prey who seem to have a healthy respect for all other birds, even their prey, the bald eagle seems to respect no bird but itself. The bald eagle seems full of itself, often making its living off of birds of lesser stature by stealing their quarry. Just ask an osprey. To me, bald eagles seem egocentric, arrogant, big-headed and superior-minded; the kind of bird that thinks the sky revolves around itself. We live right next to an eagle couple. Their home is just a hundred metres from ours. Over the past 17 years we have come to know their eaglemaniac personalities very well. I don't like them much. They are too similar to some people I know—me for instance!

Eaglemaniac is a word that I have coined for the avian version of egomaniac. According to my dictionary, an egomaniac is a person whose personality has become twisted to the point where they are extremely egocentric; where they are almost exclusively concerned with themselves at the expense of other individuals and even all of society; where the ego becomes the starting point in all thinking, even philosophy and religion; and where there is a limit in outlook to their own activities or needs. Egomania leads to scavenging an existence at the expense of others. It can't help but do this when "the other" has little or no value in one's thinking or actions. Ouch, that's a little too close to home. It sounds too much like what I am becoming, too much like what my Christian faith is becoming.

North American capitalistic society is cheering me on. It is working hard at convincing me I should aspire to be a rugged individualist, that my calling is to be a healthy consumer who does all of society a service by over-consuming to satisfy my personal thirst to possess more than I need, more than my neighbour, often at my neighbour's expense. And make no mistake about it; this consumerism is promoted as a spiritual quest. Just watch the advertisements on TV. What is promised in making purchases is often the very thing that people have historically sought through their faith; spiritual stuff like peace, freedom, serenity and contentment. Buy a new Chevrolet SUV and get real freedom; buy the new cologne Serenity and you will possess it; have a Smoothie and it will make it all better.

The spiritualism promoted by a consumer society calls me to seek personal spiritual gratification at all costs; personal spiritual fulfillment through purchasing for myself. It is a spirituality with me in the centre. It is a spirituality quite cut off from the morals, ethics and discipline demanded by God and required by community. I find myself moving in the direction of egomania, but not just any kind of egomania, "spiritual egomania." And I am cheered on by the godless consumer spiritualism of my society.

And then it hits me. I realize that the eaglemaniacs I live beside on Lac la Hache have done me a great service by rendering an old adage true, "We have seen the enemy, and he is us." And in the midst of the pilgrimage towards spiritual egomania, with the eagles' help, the words of my Master Christ hunt me down. Written-off Golden Rule slays my heart. Trite old sayings pierce my soul. Do to others as you would have them do to you. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. It is more blessed to give than to receive—Mt. 7:12; 22:39; Acts 20:35, NRSV.

Postscript: I have come to realize more and more that I don't know much about spirituality. But the eagles have taught me this much by negative example. Any spirituality that does not honour God, the other person and the community before it honours self, cannot be a Christian spirituality at all.

Rev. David Webber is a contributing editor to the *Record*. He is a minister of the Cariboo, B.C. house church ministry. His most recent book is *Like a Winter's Aspen: Embracing the Creator's Fire*.

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CARPENTER, Lillian, April 6, 1917 to August 11, 2006. Musical Director at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Saskatoon, Sask., and Parkview Presbyterian Church, Saskatoon, Sask.; retired in 1994 ending a musical career spanning five decades. Lillian was also a Life Member of the Hildur Hermanson Auxilliary, WMS. She is survived by her husband Ted, a son, two daughters and four grandchildren.

WALLACE, Margaret, on July 30, 2006. Mrs. Margaret Wallace, long-time member of First Presbyterian Church, Edmonton, Alta., W.M.S. member and presbytery hospital visitor, died at the age of 99.

Rate for obituary notices: $1 per word or $55 per column inch (the lower amount) plus GST.

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Growing together, sharing the love

The Presbytery of Algoma and North Bay continues caring for others in Jesus' name

BY JENNIFER HIGGS

The Presbytery of Algoma and North Bay is very big—not in number of churches or ministers but in sheer physical size. The challenges are obvious—to cover a lot of real estate with a handful of people. The five constituent ministers have taken on many roles this past year, with one three-point charge, a two-point charge and five single charges. Several retired ministers have come forward to help churches in their community. "They are all hard-working and dedicated people," says clerk of presbytery Don Laity. "Because of our small presbytery and the vast area that we deal with, they are meeting the challenge." Even regular meetings are difficult so they use e-mail and telephone conference calls to keep each other informed.





Members of Calvin, North Bay, build a wheelchair accessible ramp as part of a community work project.

Rev. Dan Reeves is a minister at Calvin and interim moderator for the other two churches in Sudbury. Described as "bursting at the seams," Calvin often needs more seats added to the pews for services. Calvin is a multicultural and family-oriented church. The youth group, the group calls itself "C-SIS: Christians Serving in Sudbury" is thriving with around 25 members. The youth, ages 12 and up, have recently raised money for World Vision. Besides the need for more room, the church faces another challenge in that the building is not accessible for handicapped people, Reeves says.

Reeves started a Wednesday night fellowship in 2001. He admits it has poor attendance, but says it is something he and the other two committed musicians "need to do." The idea was to attract people in the community and those in nearby public housing, but the outreach was not successful. "So now, it has carried on and basically we just get together with our instruments and we play contemporary Christian music," he says. "We do an awful lot of laughing, which I think is important."

Knox, Sudbury, is a downtown church that is looking at its future. Rev. George Hunter is retired, but active in the church, providing pulpit supply for the congregation.

In Sault Ste. Marie, St. Paul's and Victoria is a two-point charge under Rev. Deon Slabbert. After a five-year vacancy, the churches celebrated the arrival of Slabbert and his family from South Africa in 2004. These two churches have different characteristics, but both have century-long histories.

Victoria is a small country church whose congregation helps maintain the building. The congregation began in the homes of pioneers in the 1860s. Thirty years later, members decided to build a church, with construction in the early 1900s. The community enjoys socials put on by the church, such as the pasta suppers and WMS teas. This year over $700 was raised by Sunday school projects for the building and mission fund, benefiting Mist Kraal Primary School in South Africa.

The St. Paul's congregation began meeting at a local butcher shop in the late 1800s. The church was built near the end of the century and had a large attendance in those early years, as the Algoma Steel plant flourished. By 1920, a building expansion plan was underway. Today, St. Paul's faces the challenge of declining numbers. Now focusing on a future direction, the church is not giving up faith. The congregation is changing with new members and elders who will help refresh the life of the church.

St. Paul's has many programs to offer. The WMS has renamed itself The Jean Wilson WMS of St. Paul's to commemorate a former member. The M&M's: Mary and Marthas is a new women's group. There are Bible studies and plans for a second course of the Alpha program this year.

Both St. Paul's and Victoria share children's groups that feature Bible studies, crafts and discussions. The boys' group calls

itself Cadets and the girls are Gems: Girls Everywhere Meeting the Saviour. Together these groups aim to reach into the community to young people who do not attend church. With congregational support, both groups were successful in numeric growth during their first year.

Westminster, Sault Ste. Marie, has been under the leadership of interim minister Rev. Ian Johnston. Founded in 1925 by a congregation a couple of blocks away, the church has experienced growth and decline along with the changes in the local steel industry. Johnston has helped to unofficially re-open Knox Bar River, a small church built in 1892 (closed in 1983), for monthly services.

Rev. Leslie Drayer has a three-point charge in the southeast corner of the presbytery in the towns of Burk's Falls, Magnetawan, and Sundridge. Drayer says Knox, Magnetawan and Knox, Sundridge are both growing, while St. Andrew's, Burk's Falls, is declining along with the town (population 940).



Rev. Dan Reeves brings some modern music to Calvin, Sudbury.

The three towns are about a 20-minute drive apart. Drayer says he gets help from previous ministers and a retired clergy couple, who assist each church to have a Sunday morning service. All three towns attract summer cottagers, which greatly increases the number of people at the Sunday services. The churches each had 125th anniversary celebrations recently that filled their sanctuaries. "All three churches support one another's events," says Drayer, who has been a minister there for seven years.

Drayer is the presbytery's moderator. "With our presbytery being so spread out as it is, we do a lot of Internet communication," he says. He notes that e-mails and teleconferences have worked to ensure communication is efficient. A fall retreat for the clergy and commissioners in the presbytery has fostered communication each year. "It's helped to build relationships between us all," says Drayer. "The retreat experiences have been really good."

The mission statement for the three churches is Growing Together, Sharing God's Love, which describes the congregation's life and mission. As a joint effort, the congregations have been sharing God's love internationally. The Presbyterian Church in Malawi has been a focus for the three churches. Rev. Wally Little and his wife, Audrey, are members of Knox, Sundridge, and were interim missionaries to Malawi in the past. The Littles helped establish the Nemo Secondary School for Girls in Malawi, and since have brought this project to their home presbytery.

Four members of Knox, Sundridge, will be going to Malawi this fall on a mission trip to help with projects. The congregations are showing their support of this trip, which will further the connection to the girls' school. WOMEN in the church have been working on a quilting project, "with the idea of trying to make a quilt for every girl in the school," says Drayer.

Youth and children's programs at Knox, Magnetawan, include a youth group and annual Vacation Bible School. This summer, Drayer says the VBS attracted around 45 children.

There is one Presbyterian church in North Bay, led by Rev. David Jones since January 2006. Previously a minister in Brockville, Ont., Jones says he felt called to the group of people at Calvin, whose congregation has around 300 households. Though North Bay (population 52,771) is a long drive from the Sault Ste. Marie churches (about six hours), the presbytery supports its members. "When I was inducted here they came from all over the presbytery," says Jones, "so there is a real sense of congeniality."

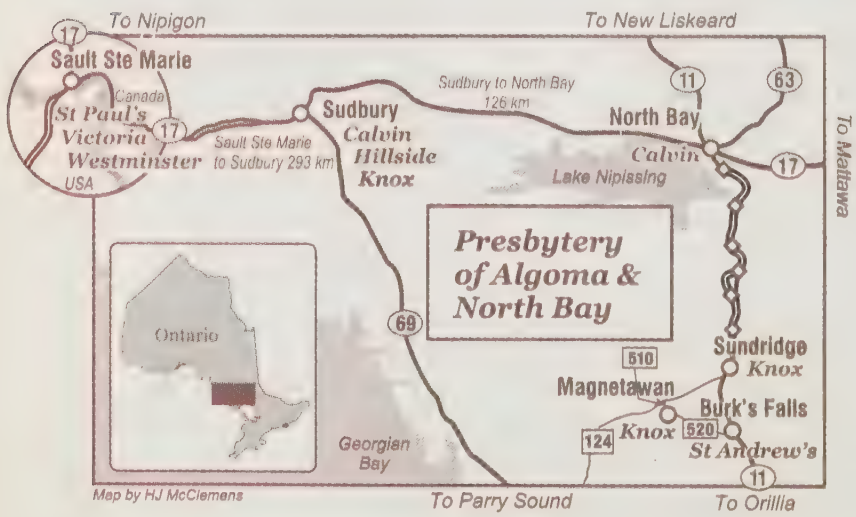
The young people at Calvin are very active. This fall, the downtown church is hosting a Presbyterian Young Peoples Society event, for ages 14 to 25. The Cry of Passion is a young people's band. Though the church is struggling to appeal to young people, Jones says this music group plays once a month during the service. "There's a willingness and a flexibility to try some new things," says Jones.

An annual August work camp in support of local mission is a community success. Around 30 members lend a hand in the one-week event to help North Bay residents who are personally unable to build or renovate their homes.

With continued projects reaching out to many people and nations, the churches in the Algoma and North Bay presbytery work towards their mission statements, while looking at future plans.

Calvin's motto is Continue the Caring of Jesus, and Jones says the congregation fully embraces this statement. He says it is found in worship, it's found in fellowship—it's even brought up at meetings for every decision.

"The motivation is to try and do things for others in the name of Jesus."



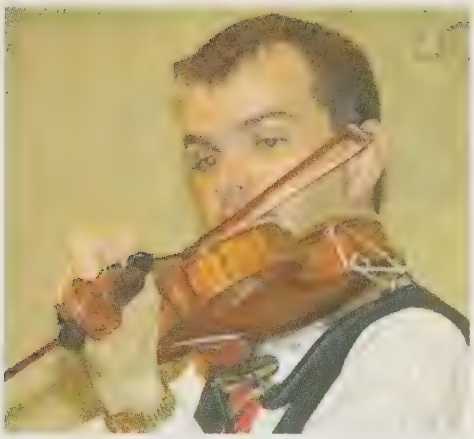
MAP: HJ MCCLEMENS

Jennifer Higgs is a recent graduate of Carleton University, Ottawa.

Music is the mission

The Woods family uses fiddle music to help churches

BY AMY MACLACHLAN





"The music that brings fellowship" starts with Scott Woods, top and includes family and friends, left.

A father's death. A mother's mission. A family's desire to share its music with others. Put these ingredients together and you get The Scott Woods Show—a six-person ensemble playing old-time fiddle music, helping churches raise money, and hopefully drawing non-churchgoers into a sanctuary for the first time. "This is music that brings fellowship, and brings people together who may not otherwise come to church. It's uplifting, and maybe we're making things seem a little brighter, and maybe people leave with a bit of inspiration," said Scott Woods.

The band traces its roots to 1950, when Mervyn Woods, the family patriarch, started the Merv Woods Orchestra. A heart attack in a grocery store in 2003 ended the senior Woods' life. True to showbiz form, the family put aside its sorrow and only two days after the funeral, played two concerts. "People asked what we were doing there," said Woods. "We just told them, Dad would want us to keep playing, so here we are."

A man of quiet faith, Merv Woods instilled in his family a concern for others. "He made sure we played for the hospitals and nursing homes," said Woods. "He used to say, 'Maybe one day you'll be in that situation and you'll be glad to have someone visit.' I think he'd be happy and proud of our accomplishments." It was this passion and devotion for music that inspired the family to continue playing.

Woods attends St. Andrew's, Fergus, Ont., along with his mother, Carolyn who plays piano (and is also an elder and choir member there), and sister Kendra Norris, on fiddle, accordion and clarinet. Woods' brother Bruce attends Duffs, Aberfoyle, and plays drums and fiddle, and the band's long-time bass player, Karl Watson, is a regular at St. Andrew's, Arthur.

The band is rounded out by Woods' niece, Meryl Norris, a champion step dancer who sometimes lends her talent to the show; family friend Ivan Felker, guitar player and vocalist; Ben Norris, Woods' nephew, plays fiddle, guitar and drums; and Gini Williams is a guest vocalist. Woods himself is a Canadian fiddle champion, has performed throughout Canada, the United States and Europe, and can turn somersaults and step dance while playing the fiddle.

Woods began playing the violin at age four. His dad played old-time fiddle music, as did both of his grandfathers. "I heard it all my life, so it came easily for me," he said. This rich heritage keeps him true to old-time music, leading to his break from the Memories of Don Messer's Jubilee—a long-running fiddle show that Woods was a part of, but bowed out from when the music became too modern. He left it in November to lead the family band.

It was his mother's heart for mission that bore the idea of using music to help others. After Merv died, Carolyn Woods told her son that she wanted to go on a mission. "I told her it wasn't really for me. And she said, 'Maybe you should use your talents to help others. Maybe the whole band should do it.'"

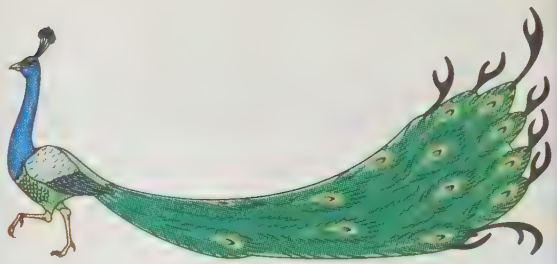
Carolyn Woods did end up going on a traditional mission trip to Haiti, but she is also a part of the music ministry her family is now involved in. The tour kicked off in the fall of 2004 with a 12-show test run. Today they play across North America to help churches and charities raise money for various projects. The band handles just about everything from set-up to clean-up and can even help advertise the event. Tickets to the show are $15, split 50/50 between the church and the band. "It really is like a ministry for the band," said Woods, as the profits they make on the shows are largely spent on travel and production costs.

Proving the old adage that the family that plays together stays together, the Woods family derives the most joy simply by being on stage and synchronizing their fiddles with each other. "If we didn't make any money, it would still be fun," said Woods. "The outreach is just a bonus for us, and traveling around and meeting great people is another bonus."

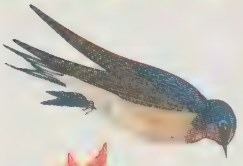
Visit www.scottwoods.ca for a show schedule or contact Scott at (519) 835-3356 or smwoods@sympatico.ca to book a concert.

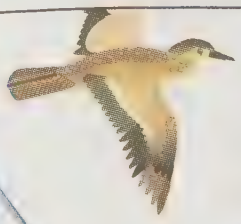
called to wonder

CREATED BY JENNIFER O'FARRELL



BIBLE BIRDS









ACROSS

2. This bird brought food to Elijah at the wadi. (1 Kings 17:4-6)

5. In the wilderness God provided this bird as meat for the people of Israel. (Exodus 16:13)

8. This bird lives in evergreen trees. (Psalm 104:17)

9. This bird was near when Peter said he did not know Jesus. (Mark 14:72)

11. This bird makes its nest in a high place. (Job 39:27)

12. God protects Jerusalem like this bird protects its young. (Matthew 23:37)

DOWN

1. David told Saul this bird hides quickly from the hunters. (1 Samuel 26:20)

3. This bird darts about like an undeserved curse, but does not come to rest. (Proverbs 26:2)

4. The distressed psalmist compares himself to this bird in a far-off wasteland. (Psalm 102:6)

6. This bird may flap its wings but does not fly. (Job 39:13)

7. Jesus wants us to be as wise as a serpent and gentle as this bird. (Matthew 10:16)

10. This common bird is precious to God, yet we are even more precious. (Luke 12:6-7)



Answers to crossword puzzle on page 42



A Hand-Rhyme for THANKSGIVING

The birds upon the treetops sing their song.
interlock your thumbs and flap your fingers (like wings)

The angels chant their chorus all day long.
move your hands as if you are conducting a choir

The flowers in the garden blend their hue.
spread your 10 fingers and then gently wave your hands back and forth (like dancing)

So, why shouldn't I? *point at yourself*

And why shouldn't you? *point to others*

Praise God too! *clap with each word*





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Inductions, Ordinations and Recognitions

April 22, 2006 Ordination of Mary Anne Grant into the Ministry of Word and Sacrament by the Presbytery of Cape Breton in Farquharson Memorial Presbyterian Church, Middle River, Cape Breton, NS.

May 14, 2006 Induction of Rev. Mary Anne Grant into the Tatamagouche Pastoral Charge of the Pictou Presbytery three-point charge of St. John's, Pugwash, St. Matthew's, Wallace and Sedgwick Memorial, Tatamagouche, NS.

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The Presbyterian Church in Canada, through the Life and Mission Agency, is inviting applications for the contract executive position of Associate Secretary, Stewardship and Education for Mission at the national office in Toronto. A complete position description is available on the webpage at **www.presbyterian.ca/jobs**. The position is for a two-year contract (with the option of a one-year extension.)

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Application Deadline: November 1, 2006


WILMA WELSH

The mission of today

The church has a long history of providing support to those who need it

I have just returned from attending the Ecumenical and Interfaith pre-conference meeting held prior to the International Aids Conference in Toronto. It was an incredible experience to have the opportunity to talk to individuals from all around the world who are committed to "Keeping the Promise" to do everything possible to help stamp out HIV/AIDS; to work together *Towards A World Without Aids* including encouraging governments to take up this challenge. We as a denomination have responded exceptionally well to the financial campaign in raising over $750,000—our goal was $500,000. Congregations are to be commended for the creative initiatives they have taken in having special events to raise funds and awareness of this serious HIV/AIDS pandemic. This is the mission of today by people of all faiths, to stamp out this dreaded virus. Many of the participants at the conference are living with the HIV virus and shared their stories. Many have lost their loved ones to AIDS. Grandmothers, some with as many as 30 grandchildren, are bearing the responsibility of raising young children. It is so hard to comprehend the vastness of this problem. In the developed world most have the privilege of getting the drugs needed to sustain a quality of life. In the developing world the drugs are not available to everyone, so an affected person's only expectation is death, a suffering death. We need to help make it possible for everyone to have the opportunity to receive the needed drugs.

* * *


Moderator Wilma Welsh was named an honorary member of the World Federation of Taiwian Association. Columbus Leo presented her the citation.

I visited St. Paul's Church in Prince Albert, Sask., in July to join in the 100th anniversary celebrations of the opening of their church building. While there, I was reminded of the courage and the call of the early missionaries who went to unknown parts of Canada and other lands to share the Gospel. Rev. James Nisbet and his wife Mary Nisbet and Miss Lucy Baker went to the Prince Albert area. The work was hard and took its toll on both James and Mary. Both died very young. The work in the area was begun 140 years ago. At the anniversay celebrations, descendants of the Nisbets were in attendance.

Shortly after the work was started in Prince Albert, a missionary by the name of Rev. John McKay began the church on the Mistawasis Reserve at the invitation of Chief Mistawasis. I was pleased to be able to visit the Mistawasis Church and was warmly welcomed by the elders and members at a barbeque at their church. As I visited informally with them I asked them what they would like me to say to the church about Mistawasis. There was an immediate response that they would like me to express their thanks and appreciation to the members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada for the support they have received over the years, and continue to receive. They are especially grateful for the appointment of their present minister, Rev. George Yando by Canada Ministries. They expressed their appreciation for the Youth in Mission program under the leadership of Dave and Anne Phillips who have been with them for the past several years, working with their youth and children. Their little church has just had some renovations; a washroom and a kitchen have been added. We make these ministries happen through our givings to Presbyterians Sharing.

During that same period that the Nisbets went to Prince Albert, Rev. Dr. John Buchanan and his wife Dr. Mary MacKay Buchanan arrived on the Bhil Field in India, and in 1872 Rev. Dr. George Leslie Mackay went to Taiwan (then Formosa). What a challenge the Canadian Presbyterian Church had in opening up all this new work in such a short period of time. What a vision our early church leaders had! Let us give thanks to God that the work of these early missionaries still continues through faithful men and women.

Let us continue to keep the promise.

M. Wilma Welsh



Moderator Wilma Welsh and Baruna Victor, of the Church of North India, at the Ecumenical Pre-Conference of the XVI AIDS Conference in Toronto. Welsh visited Victor's mission in September and will report on that trip next month.



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Exodus 35:5

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November 2006



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PRESBYTERIAN Record
NOVEMBER 2006



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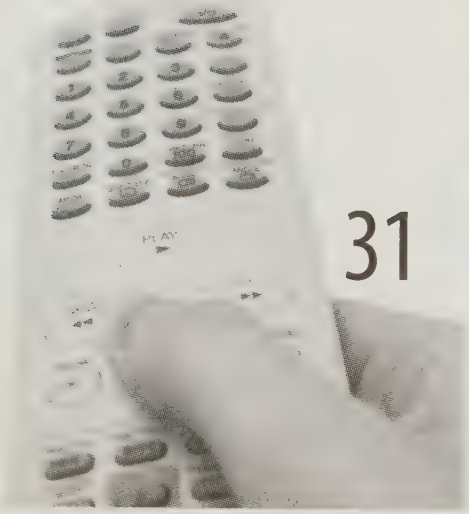
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COVER FEATURE

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On the cover: A woman and her child are just two of the hundred or so women gathered in a village outside Chennai, India in September, where they thanked PCC delegates for church support of their small business projects and self-help groups. Photo: Amy MacLaclan.

PHOTO: (TOP) AMY MACLACHLAN.



Mission is our life

Get some Christians talking about their faith and sooner or later the question is raised: how do I live out my faith in the world? What can I do to make a difference? It's a way of talking about Christian mission—knowing we are loved by God and proclaiming that love to the world.

There are many ways to answer the question, from joining a church outreach program (or starting one if your church doesn't have one) to getting involved in a community support program, such as Big Sisters, or building a home with Habitat for Humanity.

It needn't be complex: in Jesus' parable offering a glass of water where it is needed is as much a sign of faith as anything. But for those still looking, two recent international stories might provide some ideas. One was a good story, one not.

The good story was the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Bangladesh's Muhammad Yunus and the Grameen Bank he founded in 1976. Unlike the big banks, the Grameen Bank lends small sums of money to the poorest people in poorest Bangladesh.

No one born in the sixties or earlier can forget the famine in Bangladesh in 1974. Like the Vietnam War, the photographs are etched in our mind.

Yunus was a freshly minted economics PhD teaching in his hometown university of Chittagong. Seeing people crushed by tireless work but unable to lift themselves out of their poverty because money lenders charged insane interest rates of "10 per cent a month, some 10 per cent a week" as he said in an interview, he dreamt up the concept of microcredit.

The principle is simple. The interest charged can never exceed the amount of the loan. Yunus's first loan was for about $30 to a bamboo stool-maker and 41 villagers.

Today, the Grameen Bank has more than 6.6 million borrowers (97 per cent are women). Although that's just a little over 10 per cent of the 63 million Bangladeshis, nearly half the country's population of 133 million, who live in deprivation, two-thirds of them in extreme poverty, according to the World Bank.

But the bank says microcredit is helping to reduce the poverty. Christians have also slowly picked up on the microcredit success story. A decade ago, few projects involved this kind of support. Now, Presbyterian World Service and Development, for example, is involved in about 20 microcredit projects around the world.

So, initiate a freewill offering or fundraising campaign and give generously. The return on investment in such proverbial talents will be manifold as people are able to help themselves and their community.

The sad, heartache story was the release of the UN secretary-general's report into child abuse. Among other things, the four-year study found that 275 million children witness domestic violence each year, including more than 360,000 in Canada.

The report also notes that girls in some immigrant communities in Canada are still subjected to genital mutilation. It also refers to a 2002 Canadian study that showed children to be the victims in more than 60 per cent of sexual assaults, while making up less than a quarter of the population.

And, the report also notes, teachers can still inflict corporal punishment on children in more than 100 countries, not to mention that parents can do the same in even more countries.

Canada, in this respect, still doesn't have it quite right, although things have improved in recent years. However, a 2004 Supreme Court ruling still permits parents to use force if it "is part of a genuine effort to educate the child, poses no reasonable risk of harm that is more than transitory and trifling, and is reasonable under the circumstances."

The court agreed the law "permits conduct toward children that would be criminal in the case of adult victims." No one, for instance, tries "correctively" swatting an employee for repeatedly stealing company pens. Why then is it permissible with children? (canlii.org/ca/cas/scc/2004/2004scc4.html)

European studies have shown there are fewer court cases involving alleged parental discipline when the law is clear (in outlawing any physical force) then when there is wiggle room, as in Canada.

Christmas will soon be here and many people will tritely refer to it as a time for children. Christians know the message is more profound than that, but it is a time when we are more aware of the vulnerability of children. Lobbying on their behalf might also be seen as Christian mission.

Mission means being sent (from the Latin *missio*) by the Spirit to proclaim God's love just as Jesus sent the disciples. So however we choose to live out our faith in the world, mission is the message.

David Harris

letters

Long-term effects continue

I was at the last two General Assemblies, one as a commissioner and one as a visitor. Warren Whittaker and I are the directors of Winnipeg Inner City Missions, one of the church's seven ministries with aboriginal peoples in Canada. I do not think the people in the church understand that even with the motions passed at assembly in both years, the aboriginal ministries are not being given access to the use of the funds designated for healing and reconciliation to support and augment our work.

We are in the business of healing and reconciliation every day. Our staff work under the constant pressure of crisis-style ministries with inadequate funding and inadequate levels of staff. We are called to our ministries and serve because we have responded to that call. We are on the front line along with our aboriginal brothers and sisters experiencing the long-term effects of residential schools and colonialism. Long-term poverty (seven generations now), family dysfunction, hopelessness, addictions, violence and crime are all present in the form of very real people with sad histories, a name and broken spirits. Our calling is to care for God's people, minister to their spirits, restore hope, and help people rediscover joy.

We, more than anyone, are cognizant of the urgent need to reconcile and heal with the church at large and for the church to learn to walk together with our aboriginal friends. We intentionally include the larger church in our ministries in the form of our presbyteries, synods and local congregations. Mission teams visit and provide needed human and financial resources. Mission groups, committees of session and study groups across Canada who are interested may contact us for opportunities to learn more and to help. How better to help the church and aboriginal people to heal and to reconcile with God and each other? How better to spend our corporate financial resources as the church?

Margaret Mullin
Winnipeg

Vivian Ketchum's letters in the July/August issue seem an unfair criticism when the overall situation is considered. Political correctness currently rules out witnessing for the faith of our fathers, so the sacrificial effort on the part of residential schools staff doing the best they were able under the circumstances is recklessly denigrated as faulty. In actuality, the churches of the day were requested and/or required to care for the native children, many of whom were rescued from privation and potential starvation. It is incongruous to thus blot the record after the fact for faithful servants years after they have passed on.

When the Canadian government was settling with alleged victims of church custodianship, *Alberta Report* reported that the legislation ruled out permission to ask for proof that the cheque recipients were ever at the school in question, much less substantiation of harm suffered. Taxpayers were thereby indiscriminately gouged. It was unreal!

The church does injustice when it goes along blindly with perceived one-sided aggression. It would be ridiculous to presume that no abuse was perpetrated, but to paint all with disgrace is inhuman to the extreme, as I see it. Many native people were blessed by the salvation message imparted, but that is brushed aside as depriving them of their own practices and beliefs, which had let them down when rescue was offered.

J. Alvin Speers
Calgary

They paved the way

This is a year for rejoicing that our church has moved forward in recognizing women's gifts for ministry. However, let's remember that our denomination's gradual acceptance of the leadership of ordained women was preceded and prepared for by the work of capable and dedicated women who are now called members of the order of diaconal ministries.

Rev. Joyce Davis
Vancouver

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One aspect of the anniversary of the ordination of women that grieves me is the loss of the Ordained Missionary appointments, and the fact that several rural and remote churches have gone without ministers for years. Because an OM appointment was necessary for ordination, because half-time appointments didn't qualify, and because qualifying vacant churches near each other were in short supply, those who were settling clergy couples in OM appointments decided that it was more important for both partners to be ordained than for rural and remote churches to have ministers, so the OM appointments were done away with. Now that half-time appointments qualify for ordination, it's time for OM appointments to be reinstated, for the good of our rural and remote ministries.

Robin Ross
Mission, B.C.

Eighty is the new 18

I'm a single female, 83, with degrees, have worked in an office, been involved in the education system (whether I taught anyone is for them to say) at various levels, was a member of the Social Assistance Review Board; Presbyterian born and raised, stayed away from church and do not attend regularly now.

So here it is: Andrew Faiz in September suggested that youth be Christ-like. What was Jesus really like? Who was he? Do we really know? Recently one of our ministers and I discussed this somewhat. I had asked the questions: Who was Jesus, anyway? Do we really know? Whither Christianity? My reading over the past several years has led me to ask these questions. Do we have the straight story? Did Christianity go off the rails in the second century?—c.f., Elaine Pagels' *Beyond Belief*?

I came across this quote recently: "I respect faith but doubt is what gets you an education." I think we have romanticized the Jesus story almost beyond belief. I enjoyed Faiz's Christmas column in which he refers to "the kid born in a barn." That brings it back down to earth.

The long and short of it: Thank you for this article and others. You give us another way of viewing things, and sometimes even make us get up and respond.

G. Jean Elliott
Guelph, Ont.

I am an 81-year-old retired elder ("emeritus") from a Presbyterian congregation in Scarborough, Ont., whose dedicated passion is to be part of an ongoing reformation within our Canadian Presbyterian Church.

As staid (stayed?) Presbyterians, we have allowed our church to stagnate—to become irrelevant to the Christian mandate of this era. To have assumed that "canon law" was without question; that God (He/She/It) did in fact present Itself to one Middle East tribe with such selective prejudice as to have negated the veracity of much older and still living and revered religions; this does present serious questioning for Christians today.

Forty-eight years ago I became a member of this congregation. Our first full-time pastor was Rev. Donald Kemble, a Netherlander, whose theology was commensurate to that particular paradigm of reformed thought. I mention this frame as I and others of this congregation have a substantial spiritual investment in this little Christian family in Scarborough. Our national church is losing membership and our theological schools are not venturing into a faith-stretching envelope of growing understanding. As there are so many progressive invitations for thinking Christians to clarify their ongoing Christ-journey, it is truly sad that these spiritual visionaries are not being encouraged. Notably, they include John Spong with The Canadian Centre for Progressive Christianity and Rev. Gretta Vosper of West Hill United Church (www.progressivechristianity.ca). Others who are leading with great insight are: Tom Harpur, Stephen Hodge, Martin Boord, Jeffrey Moses, Michael Baigent, Karen Armstrong, Robert Monroe, Mark Epstein and Albert Taylor. These are but a few authors whose books bring fresh thinking to us and are available in our local libraries.

There are those of us who believe in a living Christ who, while leading and nurturing us through centuries, also entreats us to avail ourselves of the physical knowledge and other scientific accumulations that we have garnered over the generations. A good example of Biblical knowledge in those days was that the earth was flat and that vertical observations gave us our heavenly orientation and source of God-information. If we are to respect Biblical truth, then we must allow that truth to be applicable today. If

Pontius' Puddle



the God of the Old Testament spoke personally to the prophets, does He still speak personally to His church today? If not, why not? We have a lot of ongoing reform to accomplish!

Robert Harvey
Scarborough, Ont.

Criticizing curriculum

Re. Evaluating curriculum as reported in September. The article says, "*Gather Round* by the Brethren Press (was) also deemed unacceptable." Was a careful examination of the materials made? The article gave no reasons for the conclusion. I could only speculate that it might have to do with the view on infant baptism and the emphasis on peace.

Whether by oversight or by tactful design, the curriculum *Gather Round* was not exclusively prepared by the Brethren Press (an American denomination). It was a cooperative effort that also included the Mennonite churches of Canada and the United States. We also use a common hymnal. I would not consider the Brethren Church to be far to the right on the theological scale.

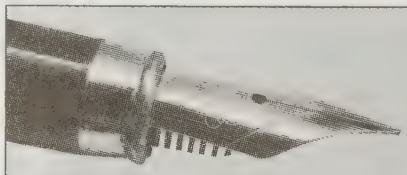
In early September, my home Mennonite congregation launched the new Sunday School year. The emphasis was on the *Gather Round* curriculum. I do not teach in the children's department but I know that those who do would not use something that is unacceptable to Mennonite theology. Neither would our churches work with a denomination that presented a theological view radically different from our own. I would say some further explanation is needed.

Kenneth Cressman
New Hamburg, Ont.

The Editor responds: The committee members were concerned that Gather Round presented a black and white idea of morality, was text-heavy and weak theologically, and the activities were not age-appropriate.

Corrections:

The photograph accompanying Moderator Wilma Welsh's article in September is wrongly attributed to the Canada Youth gathering in St. Catharines, Ont. In actuality, as some sharp-eyed readers reminded us, it is of the Camp Kintail staff singing before their commissioning service on July 1. The pictured are Jason Teakle, Jill Fergusson, Alicia Kwasney, Jo Taylor, Cory Vos and Graham Bracken, all Kintail staff. We apologize for the error.



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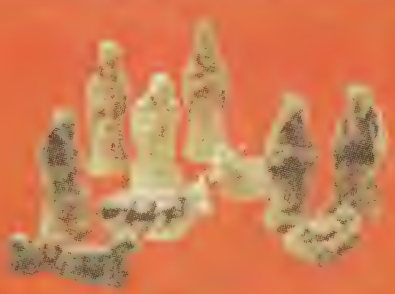


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Rev. Bert de Brujin and his wife Marilyn served a two-point charge for 26 years at St. Andrew's, Chesterville and Morewood, Ont. They look at a memory book presented to them by Morewood, along with a potluck lunch.

For more People & Places submissions please visit our website: www.presbyterianrecord.ca



Inch by inch, row by row, they're going to make their garden grow: Last year Heritage Green, Stoney Creek, Ont., elected and ordained three ruling elders. This year another four were added. After three years of an assessor session, the congregation will finally have its own governance of a session. There have been some rocky times for the congregation, but the spirit is alive and rises once more. The brand new session is comprised of JoAnne Walter, Robert Williston, interim minister John Hibbs, Andrew Pasztor, Jean Duke, Jim Carrol, Barbara Latimer and Matthew O'Grady.

HAD CAKE LATELY? Share your celebrations with the rest of the church. Send your stories to PnP@presbyterianrecord.ca along with your digital photographs, 300 dpi minimum, high quality JPEGs. Or mail the photographs to: The Record, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, M3C 1J7.

To be considered for People and Places, photographs should be sharp and everyone clearly identified. The *Record* reserves the right to reject any photos not of sufficient quality. Photographs cannot be returned.



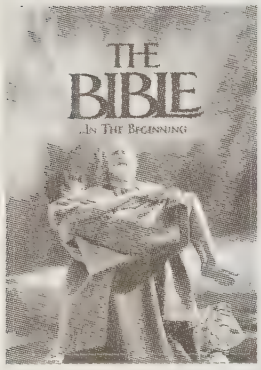
The ladies of St. Andrew's, Campbellford, Ont., do not do things by half. During the Canada Day weekend they held a Village Country Fair. They made—by hand—ice cream and pie and served 80 people, including the local federal and provincial ministers of parliament. That was the warm-up: they had demonstrations of quilting, rug hooking, chair caning and tatting, plus face painting for the kids. And, they made taffey from an original recipe, and sold 200 sticks. No word yet whether they're planning this again, but it's best to book your hotel room now. Campbellford is 1,551.33 kilometres east of Tatamagouche.



Cake of the month: Lloyd Hayman and Olla Langille were present—in the latter's case, just; in the former's, he was a single-digits-old boy—during the church union era. They were two of three people (Mary Crowley was present the next Sunday) who attended the inauguration of Sedgwick Memorial, Tatamagouche, N.S., on August 22nd, 1926. So, they were the logical choice to get first dibs on the 80th anniversary cake this past July.



Each is but a spoke, connecting to the hub: seven young people joined Osgoode, Vernon, Ont., this past summer. The future potential clerks of assembly are Ashley Taylor, Sherman Covey, Derrick Dow, Rory Graham, Ian Thompson, Kevin Vander Linden and Katharine Vander Linden. Joining them at the Bible, donated by the local WMS, is session teacher Garnet Gibson.



Fox distributes faith

TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX, the studio known for such television shows as The Simpsons, Prison Break and Celebrity Duets, and for the Star Wars movies, has announced a new division directed to a Christian audience. FoxFaith will release up to a dozen religious-themed films each year, with budgets ranging from $3-million to $20-million. Most of these will be released directly to DVD, though some might be available in local theatres.

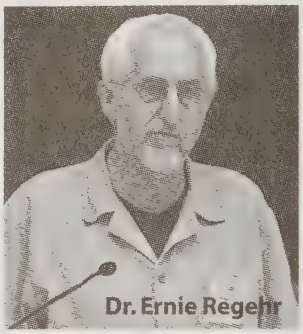
Fox vice president Jeff Yordy said, "We simply recognized that there was a hugely under-served audience and seized the opportunity to provide them with high-quality entertainment that reflects their values. As a result, we've seen explosive growth in this marketplace over the past few years, which only proves to us that we're successfully tapping into our core constituency."

Fox distributed The Passion of the Christ, selling 15 million DVD units. The Mel Gibson movie is seen as a watershed in marketing to Christians. It grossed nearly $400-million in the US alone, and nearly twice that much internationally and through DVD sales. It is now among the top-ten grossing American movies. Sony was involved in the third movie in the Left Behind series and will be distributing movies by a Christian production company. Despite the overt Christian themes in Disney's *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the movie grossed nearly $800-million worldwide.

"That's the mission: quality, story-driven entertainment that meshes with the values of our target audience," Yordy said. "But it's entertainment first. We're not in the business of proselytizing." – Los Angeles Times, ENI, Filmsite.org

Regehr named E.H. Johnson Award recipient

DR. ERNIE REGEHR was named the 2007 recipient of the E.H. Johnson Award for someone working on the "cutting edge" of mission. Regehr was a co-founder of Project Ploughshares where he was worked diligently over the past several years. He is also adjunct associate professor in Peace and Conflict Studies at Conrad Grebel University College, University of Waterloo. Next year he will teach a course on "disarming conflicts" at Wilfrid Laurier University. Regehr publishes widely on peace and security issues and maintains a broad range of international engagements related to nuclear non-proliferation and regional conflicts. He has served as an NGO representative and expert advisor on a variety of Government of Canada delegations to multilateral disarmament forums and, among his current appointments, he is a Commissioner on the World Council of Churches Commission on International Affairs and a member of the Board of Directors of the Africa Peace Forum of Nairobi, Kenya.


Dr. Ernie Regehr

Dr. Regher will receive the award at the annual E.H. Johnson Luncheon held during the June meeting of the General Assembly and will address those present.

Coalition opposes religious pluralism

A DIVERSE COALITION of religious and civil liberties groups spoke out against a U.S. House bill in which a provision was passed stating military chaplains should be mindful of the pluralistic nature of the army and provide non-sectarian and inclusive prayer if necessary. Chaplains or their endorsing groups filed no complaints. However, the civil liberties coalition felt the provision was "unnecessary and unwise."

"The fact is, there was no outcry from chaplains or their endorsing organizations concerning an adverse environment for ministry," said K. Hollyn Hollman, general counsel for the Baptist Joint Committee. "Chaplains recognize that ministry in the military takes place in a pluralistic setting and that the focus should be on the armed service members and the soldiers' freedom to freely express their faith."

Chaplains should pray in a more inclusive manner, however, when "prayer is called for in a large-group setting or 'command ceremony' where attendance may not be voluntary. If a chaplain does not feel comfortable offering a non-sectarian, inclusive prayer in such a setting, he or she should have the right to refuse to participate without negative consequences."

Six decades of fair trade

THE OLDEST AND LARGEST fair trade organization in North America marked its 60th anniversary this year. Ten Thousand Villages, based in Ontario, is an initiative of the Mennonite Central Committee, the relief and development agency of the church, and has been working around the world since 1946. Today there are 43 stores, along with hundreds of festival sales, selling products from over 120 artisan groups in 35 developing countries.

Recently returned from visits to artisans in Vietnam and Indonesia, Marv Frey, CEO of Ten Thousand Villages, offered this comment: "I've seen with my own eyes the difference that we make to some 125,000 people each day. The past, present and future of Ten Thousand Villages is grounded in our commitment to fair trade. We are all playing a part in changing people's lives for the better and that, to me, is a miracle. I want to congratulate and thank everyone that has helped us reach this milestone of 60 years. Who knows where another 60 years might take us!"

Ten Thousand Villages was a sponsor of the *Record's* fair trade contest give-away in 2005.



Weekday Christians: Angela Cluny, centre, of Leaside Presbyterian, Toronto, measures drywall along with Lynda Marshall of Good Shepherd Community Church and Victor Aguius of Chinese Martyrs Catholic, while Rev. Dan West, right, of Runnymede Presbyterian, Toronto, screws drywall to the ceiling at the Fourth Annual Faith Leaders Build for Habitat for Humanity. These good shepherds worked towards building 10 homes for struggling families. Each of the recipient families provide 500 hours of "sweat equity" to Habitat for Humanity as down payment for a two or three bedroom, 1,200-square foot home, worth approximately $130,000. The families will then pay a monthly mortgage of up to $1,000, which in the Toronto market is less than rent for a reasonable apartment.



Rev. Randy Naylor, European region chair Piet Halma and Rev. Douglas du Charme

Advocacy agency moves to Toronto

World Association for Christian Communication, a media savvy advocacy agency with representatives in over 100 countries, opened its new offices in Toronto in October. The London, England-based organization moved over 450 boxes, along with a comprehensive library and nearly its full staff, into a renovated United church on Danforth Ave. Rev. Randy Naylor, general secretary of WACC, said the $700,000 church renovation and international move was done smoothly and in "record time." He also praised the congregation of Hope United church, and their minister Rev. Douglas du Charme, for "moving mountains" to convert the seven-decade-old Sunday school wing of the church into a modern, fully networked office.

Naylor said Toronto was chosen because it "reflects WACC's belief that communication defines people's common humanity, creates community and strengthens cultures."

WACC was born 50 years ago after the Second World War as the World Association of Christian Broadcasting to work on behalf of churches. It has since taken on more of an advocacy role. On its website, WACC declares: "The Gospel, being the Good News for the poor, needs to be constantly reinterpreted from the perspectives of the poor and oppressed. This challenges church hierarchies to disassociate themselves from the power structures which keep the poor in a position of subservience. In this sense, the Good News for the poor embodies genuine reconciliation by means of which the dignity of all people can be reaffirmed."

Resistance is necessary

THE STUBBORN RESISTANCE to empire exhibited in the Bible by the Jews in the Old Testament and Jesus in the New Testament is a model to be emulated by Christians today, a panel of World Alliance of Reformed Churches theologians stated earlier this year from Manila, Philippines.

An Ecumenical Faith Stance Against Global Empire for a Liberated Earth Community calls on WARC's 218 member churches to resist empire and build peaceful communities. It follows the 2004 Accra, Ghana, declaration, which is generally seen as a blueprint for theological and ecumenical affirmation of environmental, spiritual and social change. "This presents life and death challenges for Christians, as the empire uses religion to justify its domination and violence and makes claims that belong to God alone," says the statement.

The Manila Declaration states that the nature of the global empire is evident in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, martial law in the Philippines, economic punishment of countries such as North Korea and Cuba as well as in the repressive measures associated with the "war on terror."

The statement says that there are two key aspects to global empire today: neoliberal capitalistic globalization and global militarization. "These are interrelated, as economic domination and military rule are inextricably joined. The military forces of the empire act as the global cop to maintain order and security of the global market."

"We ask all churches whose missions and peoples have historically been involved in empire building to seriously scrutinize in partnership with the victims of their imperial past their structure, teaching, liturgy, funding agencies and policies as well as their political allegiances, in order to repent and reshape their life in all aspects in the spirit of the anti-imperial biblical heritage."

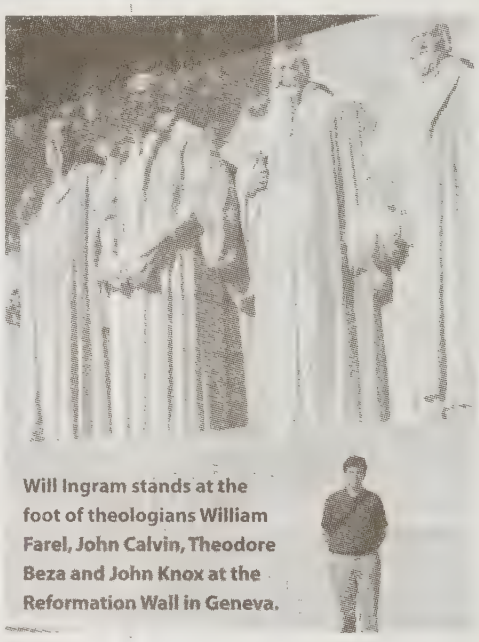
The full text of the Manila Declaration, along with other WARC documents can be found at: www.warc.ch

Some honest differences amongst friends

The WCC works towards ecumenical cooperation

BY WILL INGRAM

Upon my return from the central committee of the World Council of Churches in Geneva, Switzerland, I read a rather interesting comment from a Presbyterian minister friend, written in response to the newly elected WCC moderator, which spoke about the need for "new life" in the ecumenical movement. My friend wrote, "Like a probe sent to Mars, finding life may be a product of where you look for it. I see it all about me in my city. It is here that I see so much vitality and growth in ecumenism, along with growing acceptance and sharing." After all, he suggested, the local expressions of ecumenism, in his city, are vibrant and healthy. People of different backgrounds regularly worship together, work on issues of common concern and have, through those involvements, broken down many of the historic divides in the Body of Christ. What more is needed on a national or international scale?



Will Ingram stands at the foot of theologians William Farel, John Calvin, Theodore Beza and John Knox at the Reformation Wall in Geneva.

My friend's comments are representative of the experiences that most of us in Canada enjoy. But we should never forget that our experience, in this country, is not enjoyed by many of our brothers and sisters in faith. Rather, lines of conflict and division continue to mar the relationships that exist between Christians in many other countries.

The stated priorities of the World Council of Churches, for the coming seven years, will focus on many of these issues which seek to provide help and support to individual denominations and congregations in their own work towards greater understanding and unity. And so it is that the WCC continues to develop inter-religious dialogue and cooperation, ecumenical and faith formation, while at the same time working on giving voice and witness to the world and addressing issues of power and affirming peace.

As individuals and as local congregations, we need to celebrate and strengthen local ecumenical commitments; but, there is also a need for us to continue to celebrate and strengthen the quest for unity among the Body of Christ throughout the world.

I conclude with a quotation from the report of the WCC General Secretary, Rev. Dr. Samuel Kobia, to the recent WCC Central Committee meeting. His words remind us that our relationship with the rest of the Body, both locally and globally, is meant to be rooted not in suspicion or in institutional structures, but rather in friendship. He wrote:

> I have called you friends, Jesus told his followers, (John 15:15) prior to his prayer that we may all be one. (17:21) Friendship is at the heart of all we do. In the end, our talk of a fellowship of churches, integrated models of working, interactive programmes and new patterns of ecumenism, depends on the formation of friendships that will abide.
>
> It is true that there remain some honest differences among the churches represented here. But we have a friend in common. So let us welcome one another, build relationships of trust and love, and continue our journey together to the glory of the Triune God.

– Rev. Will Ingram is the PCC's representative to the World Council of Churches and minister at Morningside-High Park, Toronto. To learn more about the WCC please visit: www.oikoumene.org. Ingram's blog about his visit to Geneva can be found at www.morningsidehighpark.com.

'Thank You, Padre'

Remembering Canada's Presbyterian military chaplains in the Second World War

BY THOMAS J. HAMILTON

When Canada declared war on September 10, 1939, Presbyterian ministers rallied to the call. Presbyterian clergy served as auxiliary service officers and as combatants. The majority of Presbyterian clergy who donned military uniforms, did so as chaplains. Throughout the war, 91 full-time and many part-time Presbyterian ministers served as navy, army or air force chaplains. Of the four Protestant denominations contributing to the Canadian Chaplain Service, Presbyterians were spared the tragedy of suffering a chaplain killed in action.

According to instructions for the CCS the role of Padres "was primarily and essentially to seek the spiritual and moral welfare of the men..." In his official role the chaplain acted as: sports instructor, referee, entertainment officer, education coordinator and/or professor, facilitator and lecturer in Padre's Hours (mostly in the Army), counsellor and minister/priest responsible for Church Parade, the Sacraments, prayers, funerals and for contacting and providing solace to next of kin. Besides their official role, other unofficial responsibilities involved creative initiative on the part of chaplains. Such items included arranging for midweek Bible study groups, acting as impromptu tour guides and creating unit newspapers.

There was also the mundane, yet occasionally humorous, duty of censoring mail. Such work, however, familiarized the chaplains with the day to day issues affecting the men and also revealed light-heartedness as one chaplain discovered in a letter: "The Padre told us on Sunday that Dan and Beersheba were two places in the Holy Land. Gosh, he's spoiled it! I always thought they were man and wife, sort of a romance like Sodom and Gomorrah."

Army chaplains were supposed to remain in the rear echelons during battle, but frequently they went up the line to help drag wounded from the battlefields or assist the Medical Officer at the Regimental Aid Post. For H/Capt. Charlie Maclean the RAP was often in the direct line of fire:

"I remember our first baptism of fire [at] Bourguebus, France, and I buried quite a few there. And wherever the sick bay was, the Germans had that tapped and we were shelled regularly, several times a day. And I remember one time, the doctor and I were standing, it was a big stone house, and we were standing in the entrance, and we heard this shell coming—bang—and the big lintel over the door just came crashing down at our feet. And it [the house] was just a shell; it'd been hit so often."

In the raid on Dieppe, of the approximately five thousand Canadians who attacked, 3,367 became casualties and 1,946 became POWs. For his role during the attack Padre Foote was awarded the military's most prestigious award, the Victoria Cross, the only military chaplain in the British Commonwealth ever to receive such an honour. His citation included the following inscription: "Those who observed him state that the calmness of this heroic officer as he walked about collecting the wounded on the fire-swept beach will never be forgotten."



Padre Robert Seaborn praying with soldiers hours before the D Day landings, June 6, 1944.

A chaplain's diligence and dedication to his men brought respect and admiration. An anonymous soldier with the Toronto Irish was awestruck with the work of H/Capt. David Rowland during the aftermath of battle:

"The Padre would travel miles to the field hospitals to visit the boys. Literally thousands of miles to any hospital where there was thought to be an Irish lad. There was never a hospital that Davey missed in his endless travels, bearing mail, cigarettes and comforts for the lads who had been hit, or who were ill."

Still, it was the Padre's role in moments of death and dying which brought the greatest praise:

"I recall that we have brought another lad into the RAP who had stepped on a mine. He was badly dismembered. He was going quickly. The MO gave him a needle and rallied him for a few minutes. He was preparing to give him another one. The Padre tapped him on the shoulder as much as to say, "Leave him to me now." He held the lad in his arms and comforted him until he passed away."

Many Presbyterian ministers discovered that their military experiences during the Second World provided them with the opportunity for ministry opportunities of unprecedented proportions. Such opportunities were not without cost. The widow of Padre Johnston believed that the rigors associated with her husband's military chaplaincy took 10 to 15 years off his life. For many veterans that personal cost was life changing. As one veteran remarked about Padre Rowland, "I never met a man like him, nor have I since. I tried to pattern my life after him." For others their words were simply, "Thank you, Padre."

– Rev. Dr. Thomas J. Hamilton serves in team-ministry with his wife, Rev. Paula Hamilton, at St. Mark's Presbyterian Church, Charlottetown, P.E.I., and St. Columba Presbyterian Church, Marshfield, PEI.This is an abridged version of his full text,which can be found on our web site.



Ontarians in Newfoundland

SUMMERTIME MEANS choir tours, of course, and the Ontario Presbyterian Chorus spent theirs in Newfoundland. Seventy-four members sang their way through June, helping churches raise funds for local projects. St. Andrew's, St. John's, raised $1,000 through ticket sales and applied it to their renovations fund. The Salvation Army Citadel, Deer Lake, got $300 for the Ecumenical Relief Fund.

Churches were not the only beneficiaries. The choir members were overwhelmed by the generosity of Newfoundlanders. In Lewisport, for example, they sang at St. Matthew's United and were billeted locally. They heard many stories of how the community had gathered around those travelers stranded in near-by Gander after September 11th, 2001.

In a unique version of a swear jar, choir members donated 25 cents each time they misspoke, calling their coach a bus. They raised $590 for the Grenfell Mission in St. Anthony's.

– Katherine Allen

Choir wows staff

The choir of the Hungarian Theological Seminary from Romania, under the direction of mission staff person Brian Johnston, arrived in Canada in late September and performed to standing ovations across the Maritimes and Ontario for two weeks. In introducing the choir to church office personnel, Annemarie Klassen thanked Johnston and the choir for bringing their ministry to Canada. A choir member later returned the compliment by thanking the Presbyterian staff for supporting them in their mission.

The 17-member choir is comprised of seminary students studying to become ministers in Romania and across Eastern Europe. The choir members were genuinely moved by their Canadian tour.

To hear the choir please go to www.presbyterian.ca



Green church applauded

"THIS IS A REAL MARRIAGE of theology and architecture," Dwight Duncan, Ontario's energy minister told architect Roberto Chiotti who designed the "green" St. Gabriel's Roman Catholic Church in Toronto.

"Churches, mosques, synagogues, gurdwaras and temples represent a real opportunity when it comes to conservation," said Duncan. "By making their buildings and grounds greener, faith communities will be able to reduce energy costs by 20 per cent or more."

"Reducing costs was one of the reasons for building a green church," Father Paul Cusack, Pastor of St. Gabriel's explained. "But our primary motivation was to establish a link between the sacredness of the gathered community of faith and the sacredness of Earth." Included in St. Gabriel's state-of-the-art green design are a solar glass wall on the south face that harnesses the energy of the sun and features a "living wall" draped in foliage over which a thin layer of water constantly flows. The living wall is designed to purify the air of both the gathering space and the main sanctuary.

"There are approximately 1,100 faith community buildings in the greater Toronto area and if only one quarter improved the energy efficiency of their place of worship they could reduce their green house gas emissions by an estimated 26,500 tonnes," said Ted Reeve of Faith and the Common Good, a national organization focusing on matters of social and environmental concern. "They could also reduce their energy bills by 20 per cent or more." *– Ontario's Conservation Bureau*



St. Andrew's and St. Paul's visitors received the Saskatoon Native Circle Ministry quilt in April. Left to right: Judith Kashul, Rev. Stewart Folster, Keith Randall, Don Walcot and Corine Eyahpaise.

Church twins with mission

A long friendship in Christ was confirmed in September, when a twinning covenant was signed by the Saskatoon Native Circle Ministry and The Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul, Montreal.

The two ministries have had a relationship for six years and discussions to formalize their covenant began earlier this year.

At an afternoon service conducted by Rev. Stewart Folster in his store-front mission on 20th Street in Saskatoon, Merle McGowan, chair of the board, signed on behalf of the SNCM. Dr. Lawrence Hutchison, Clerk of Session, signed in a simple ceremony following the morning service in Montreal, which included the presentation to the congregation of a quilt the visitors had received in April. Folster explained that Bright Morning Star (Revelation 22:16) is a native name for Jesus. Corine Eyahpaise, the native elder who created the quilt, added that it represents a guide for a long journey.

"The Saskatoon Ministry, in a neat clean building, is a true mission, leading people to Christ, drawing them in with sympathy, food and a place to rest," said Don Walcot, chair of the Montreal church's board of trustees. "Goals are modest but realistic and Stewart is a very knowledgeable and capable minister—missionary—a role model."

The text of the covenant, based on a recommendation from the PCC, reads: "As God is our witness, the people of the Church of St. Andrew's and St. Paul's and the people of Saskatoon Native Circle Ministry, make this covenant. The essence of our twinning is our relationship in Christ as brothers and sisters. We promise to pray for one another and to share our joys and sorrows. We promise to correspond in various ways to enrich our friendship. We promise to find ways to share how God has spoken to us. We promise, as God leads us, to follow other paths that lead to areas of common concern. We promise to listen and learn from each other. Above all, we will share our commitment to Christ. We are the Body of Christ, in mission together, doing the work that God calls us to do."

The church group will study western treaty history during the winter to enrich their understanding of the context surrounding native issues in Canada. – *Keith Randall*

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Opera 'self-censored'

ENI–German chancellor Angela Merkel has criticised as "self censorship" the cancellation of a Mozart opera in Berlin because of concern that a scene featuring the severed head of the Prophet Muhammad could lead to attacks by Muslims.

"Self censorship because of fear is intolerable," Merkel said , following the decision of a Berlin opera house not to stage Mozart's opera, *Idomeneo*, the German Protestant news agency epd reported.

The cancellation of the scheduled November performance of the opera came under fierce criticism from German artists and politicians including Berlin's governing mayor Klaus Wowereit who said the decision was wrong. He said he was not aware of any "specific threat that justified the cancellation of the opera."

The opera portrays the rebellion of human beings against their gods. In the production that was to have been performed at Berlin's Deutsche Oper, Idomeneo appears in the epilogue with a bloody bag, from which he pulls out the severed heads of Poseidon, Jesus, Buddha and Muhammad.

Indigenous theology

ENI–A group of indigenous people from all over the world has urged the Lutheran World Federation to establish a program to help uplift the lives of a group of people often not accepted in mainstream societies.

The question of land rights was strongly debated at the consultation called An Indigenous Communion in September in Karasjok, the capital of the Sami people, in northern Norway. Delegates left the northern Finmark territory in the Arctic Circle which was blanketed in snow, many of them to return to deserts or jungles.

"We call for the elaboration of an indigenous theology, involving indigenous perspectives and including indigenous women's perspectives," part of the message said.

Three themes were chosen as the most important to be dealt with in the future: human rights and land rights; promoting networking among indigenous peoples; theological and ethical study and indigenous spirituality.

Scots make covenant

ENI–Two Scottish Protestant churches have signed an agreement to help promote good relations between the denominations.

The covenant was signed by the Moderator of the Church of Scotland's General Assembly, Alan McDonald, and his counterpart from the United Free Church of Scotland, Andrew McMillan. "The purpose of this covenant is to promote good relations and communications between both denominations and in particular to give a greater understanding on the differences or perceived differences of each denomination," the Church of Scotland noted in a statement.

The Church of Scotland has about 600,000 members and 1,200 ministers, and has its roots in the 17th century Calvinist Reformation. The United Free Church of Scotland was originally founded in 1900, but its present organization dates from 1929 when a minority of the denomination refused to enter a union with the Church of Scotland. Both churches are Presbyterian in structure.

"This signing is part of a larger strategy to have exploratory discussions with a variety of churches, with none having union as their immediate goal," the Church of Scotland said in its statement.

A United Free Church working group will monitor the implementation of the covenant and report back to its general assembly.

No time for fighting

ENI–Christians must stop squabbling and face the common enemies of disease and poverty, Anglican Bishop Dinis Sengulane of Lebombo in Mozambique said. He was celebrating the centenary of an Anglican association to help what are now former Portuguese colonies in southern Africa that are listed by international organizations as countries with some of the most difficult living conditions on earth today.

"When we have a challenge which threatens human life we must respond with transparency and boldness, not arrogance," the bishop told Ecumenical News International about his fight against HIV/AIDS and malaria. "There's no time for fighting among ourselves."

Hungary's 'moral crisis'

ENI–Hungarian church leaders have urged politicians to show greater responsibility, following days of street protests calling for the resignation of the country's premier after he admitted telling lies about the economy.

"We have observed with great concern the political processes of recent days," the country's Ecumenical Council of Churches, which has 10 Protestant and Orthodox member denominations, said in a statement. "They testify to frustration, and to a grave moral crisis which our country has been led into by the irresponsible conduct and lies of governing politicians."

The statement was issued as protests continued outside the Hungarian parliament, demanding the resignation of premier Ferenc Gyurcsany.

"There can be no trust in institutions of a democratic system if the moral categories which uphold this system are forgotten," the Hungarian Reformed Chuch said in a statement. "The right to free speech, which is key to the state of law, cannot be identified with freedom to tell lies."

Tap that water

ENI–Members of Canada's largest Protestant denomination are going to drink tap water at future meetings and not the bottled variety that has become institutionalised at gatherings, if church leaders have their way.

United Church of Canada leaders say this stems from decisions made at the general council of the church when the denomination's main decision-making body demanded an end to the privatisation of water.

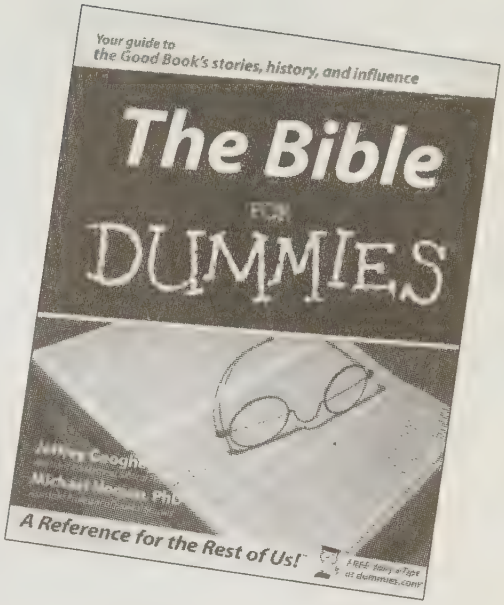
"Bottled water containers labelled with images of pristine natural environments are rapidly becoming a major threat to the environment and to our health," notes the Web site of KAIROS, a social justice group supported by the United, Presbyterian and other churches.

"The bottled water industry's marketing of 'safe, clean water' undermines citizens' confidence in public water systems, and paves the way for the water companies to take over underfunded public utilities."In 1990, 51 million people worldwide got their water from private companies, but by 2003, the number had increased to 300 million.

Morons for the Messiah

Spiritual guides for dummies and idiots

BY ANDREW FAIZ



Simple, smart, sure, but these books read like music videos. Short chapters, bits of this and that here and there, lots of non-sequiters, all of which somehow accumulates into a narrative

The problem is these are very good books. Oh yes, that is a problem—because a book with the title *The Bible for Dummies* sounds like a punch line for some petty, mean spirited joke. Even more so *Catholicism for Dummies* or *Islam for Dummies*; as if either Catholicism or Islam are for idiots or that rich theological learning has been dumbed down.

But nothing could be further from the truth. The Idiot Guides and Dummies books are often well written by specialists in the field. *Religion for Dummies* is written by a rabbi and a monsignor who are famous as The God Squad in the States. They have produced a very good book on comparative religions—in less than 400, easy to read pages, filled with cartoons, bad puns, little boxy sidebars and quaint fonts, the reader will come away with a working knowledge of a half dozen major world religions and also of some indigenous beliefs.

In less than 30 pages, in the same book, the reader gets a thumbnail sketch of the birth, life and death rituals of a dozen faiths. It's breezy, of course, but that doesn't make it dumb. There are 31 books on religion and spirituality in the Idiot's Guides catalogue; about 20 in Dummies. None of them will get you a PhD in the subject but very few of us have seven spare years despite our constant thirst for deeper understanding of faith and spirituality. We need something simple and smart.

Simple, smart, sure, but these books read like music videos. Short chapters, bits of this and that here and there, lots of non-sequiters, all of which somehow accumulates into a narrative. This is the language of cartoons, of video games—in fact of many things associated with visual media, including web sites. Sure there are words in these books, and after all we old folk who grew up on words can make sense of words, but these books aren't written in the old fashioned language of words.

They are designed in the language of today. Not surprising since these series started out as how-to books on computers and computer programs. There are lots of little tid-bits you need to know to understand how to create a Flash film: you can't use a drop-down menu unless you know what it is. So, the how-to book has a little box on the side explaining the terms being used. That was the template. And while there are still lots of how-to-do-things titles, there are increasingly how-to-be titles emerging.

And there is nothing more how-to-be than religion—it has the patent on the theme. *Spirituality for Dummies* is the perfect example. Take it seriously and it will prove a serious book; it is simple in its language and its process but not simpleminded. It is well written and nicely balances a lot of different spiritual traditions, including Christianity. It might make a very good study guide for a group. That could be said of several of these books.

Still, given that there are nearly two thousand of these Idiot and Dummies books, including titles on Scrapbooking and Being Psychic they lend themselves to being mocked. Anything ubiquitous quickly sinks to public contempt. So, perhaps that is why *Christianity for Dummies* sounds so wrong.

Or perhaps it's something else. We are easily humbled by technology (and golf) but when it comes to our faith we rarely express humility. Father John Triglio, who co-authored the book on Catholicism and also *Women in the Bible for Dummies* made the point in an online interview that St. Paul used the phrase "fools for Christ. The actual word in the Greek, if you translate it literally, means morons. Nobody gets bent out of shape that St. Paul is calling them a moron."

Make no mistake, however: *Christianity for Dummies* is no Marcus Borg. But then as an intelligent well-read friend recently said to me, "I don't know what he's trying to say." She might need to become a dummy, or an idiot. *Spirituality for Dummies* begins by reminding us that the first step towards wisdom is to realize we know nothing. And maybe, just maybe, that's the real problem.

Andrew Faiz is a writer, producer and filmmaker. He is also managing editor of the Record. You can reach him at mngeditor@presbyterianrecord.ca.

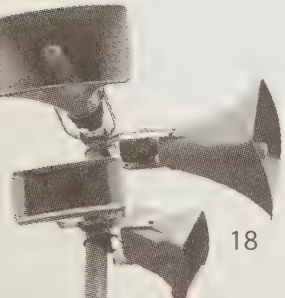


MISSION *is* THE MESSAGE

And looking at those who sat around him, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother." **Mark 3:34-35**

Whether it means cleaning barns in Eastern Europe or holding the hands of AIDS-stricken children in sub-Saharan Africa, Presbyterian lay members and clergy are there. The Great Commission may have meant conversion and conquest at some point in Christian history but today the definition is much more complicated and compelling.

Mission today means giving voice to the voiceless, strength to the weak, it means educating ourselves to the experience and reality of others, shaking our own comfort zones, creating comfort for those who have never known peace in their lives or their homelands. Mission is everything we do; it is The Message we deliver to ourselves and to others.



MISSION IS THE MESSAGE • MISSION IS THE MESSAGE • MISSION IS THE MESSAGE

Then there was the gospel

The church has long had a love affair with India

BY AMY MACLACHLAN

The child sat nestled against her young mother's side when the delegation from The Presbyterian Church in Canada walked into her hospital room. No more than four years old, her warm brown eyes followed her visitors closely, not knowing why she was such an attraction. Her mother, whose age was difficult to tell but seemed no more than 21, was dressed in a fuchsia sari; her head covered.

"She is a member of the Banchara tribe; a prostitute," said Dr. Patience Williams, director of the Ratlam Christian Hospital in India, which is supported by the PCC. "She's HIV-positive, and so is her daughter."

The visitors, which included Moderator Wilma Welsh, Rev. Ron Wallace of International Ministries and Rev. Sarah Kim of the Women's Missionary Society, murmured among themselves, troubled by this news. Among the Banchara tribe, located in Northern India, prostitution is socially sanctioned and is part of the village's livelihood. It is the site of a PWS&D-supported program called Project Nirmal, where health workers teach tribe members about HIV/AIDS and encourage the use of condoms, distributing them freely.

Dr. Williams then introduced another woman, whose five-year-old son stood beside her, clinging to her thigh. "She became infected through her husband," the doctor said, after he had visited a prostitute at the Banchara village. "Her son is also positive; luckily, her other child is not."

The Presbyterian Church in Canada has had a love affair with India since the 1870s, when its first missionaries began to trickle in. The church's presence is stamped across the country's landscape: schools, hospitals, community health centres, missionary homes. These programs, and the dedication of the people who run them, is nothing new.

"In the beginning, there was education and health care. Then there was the gospel," said Pauline Brown, a missionary in India since 1951, who spent the majority of her time running the community health program in Jobat. "So these centres, in some form or another, have existed for centuries."



Left: Women of Amkhut at a service celebrating the release of the Bhil prisoners. Right: A Bhil dance at the dedication of the Masihi Christian School in Jobat, India.

The list of Presbyterian projects in India goes on and on: community health projects in Amkhut and Mendha; an efficient and well-regarded hospital in Hatpipliya and its just-begun village health programs; the Jobat Christian Hospital along with its school of nursing; a large, government-praised hospital in Indore. And, the Ratlam Christian Hospital run by Williams who is raising money from various donors and creating profit-making endeavours to renovate the aging building, begin new programs, and offer a higher standard of care. Christian schools are also supported by Presbyterians and are seeing class sizes grow, new buildings going up, and students going onto university and employment.

Community health programs, which serve remote villages and train village women in basic health care, nutrition, hygiene and midwifery, are an acute example of how education helps halt the hallmarks of poverty, which include sickness, disease, poor hygiene and inadequate nutrition. The women take their knowledge back to their villages, improving the health and well-being of their communities.

"The government has said that India's biggest resource is its people," said Anitha Mahendiran, director of the Institute for Development Education (IFDE), whose programs in and around Chennai are supported by the PCC. "The only way to prosper is by elevating its human resources."

Educating and empowering women in particular, whose backs bear the brunt of daily labour both in and out of the home, is one way of breaking India's cycle of poverty. That's why IFDE along with another secular NGO, Roofs for the Roofless, runs programs specifically for women; enabling them to strengthen social ties with one another, gain the self-confidence to speak out for change in their communities, and giving them the ability to secure bank loans and start their own small businesses.

"The social part is important," said Mahendiran. "They're recognized as members of society. They're no longer second-class citizens."

As the church continues to offer education to those who may not otherwise receive it, an end to India's ills creeps ever closer. "Education is what is lacking," said Dr. K.K. Dutta, who runs the Christian hospital in Hatpipliya. "It is our major aim, and we feel, in due course, things can change."



Above: An outreach service held by Young Adults in Mission team for St. Andrew's Presbyterian, Grenada, which was nearly destroyed by Hurricane Ivan. Below: young adults: Mike Smith, Reuben St. Louis, Katy Whitfield, Lindsey Nigra and Ken Stright (a young adult at heart).

Spiritual spice

Exploring the depth of experience in Grenada

BY KEN STRIGHT



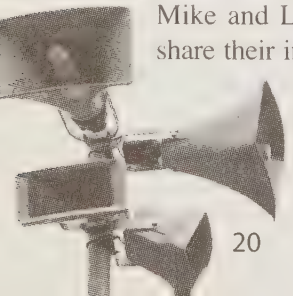
Welcome to CANACOM YAM work camp 2006 from the spice island of Grenada! Grenada is known for its spices—nutmeg, cloves, ginger, cinnamon and cocoa—and the scent fills the air at Saturday markets. The theme for our work camp came from our particular context: Enabling the Spice Within (using the gifts of the Spirit for the mission of the church). Every three years CANACOM (of which The Presbyterian Church in Canada is a founding member) sponsors a work camp for young adults ranging in age from 18-30, which is hosted by one of the member churches.

As the old saying goes, you had to be there. But you were there—as you, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, commissioned Mike Smith and Lindsey Nigra to be the Canadian spice added to that of the other participants. You were there as Reuben St. Louis convened the International Planning Committee and led in music and song and games and … and anything else asked of him. And you were there as I was privileged to preach time and again, to offer my sessions on Building Community. You were there as Mike told everyone, "I am Canadian;" and as Lindsey led an evening of appreciation for one another. And our congregations were there as Richmond Hill, Ont., purchased the VBS materials and other resources and as the New Church Development in Tantallon, N.S., shared their Summer Bible Camp t-shirts with a couple of dozen children from the Samaritan Presbyterian Church. And it is you, the Presbyterian church, who will benefit as young adults such as Mike and Lindsay come back to your churches and share their insights and offer their ideas for mission in your midst. And they are joined by my daughter, Naomi along with Julie Carter, back from a mission trip in Taiwan and those who went off to Guatemala and Mistawasis and … and all those we send to the ends of the earth.

As St. Theresa prayed:

Christ has no body now but yours,
no hands but yours, no feet but yours;
yours are the eyes through which Christ's compassion looks out on the world.
Yours are the feet with which Christ is to go about doing good
and yours are the hands with which Christ is to bless us now.

This may be the real reason for such work camps as we explore the depths on one another's experience of God. Nothing binds people closer than an open expression of personal faith—unless it is the joint experience of facing down a rather large tarantula! – *Rev. Ken Stright has participated in three work camps this decade.*



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For the youth, by the youth

In Ottawa youth lead themselves in worship

BY KATIE MUNNIK

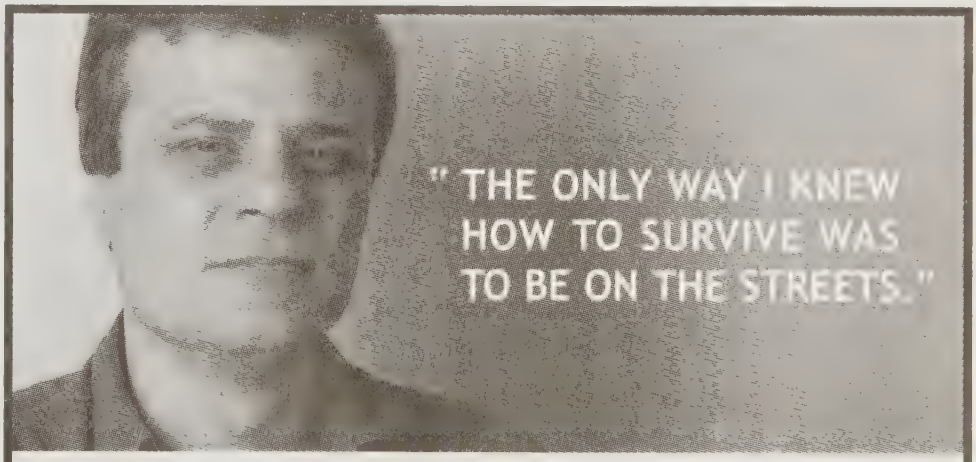
For 10 years now, the youth of the Presbytery of Ottawa have been joining together for a monthly youth worship service. These services began in 1996 as a way of connecting youth and youth groups within the presbytery so that they might hear about Jesus and the Christian faith in a way that is understandable and relevant to them. It was also the hope of Blair Bertrand, then youth leader at Westminster and a key instigator of the Ottawa services, to keep youth connected to an ongoing community of worship in between the spiritual highs youth often experience at summer camp and youth retreats. These services were not meant to compete with regular Sunday morning worship, but rather to give youth the opportunity to experiment with the experience of worship.

The services have evolved since the beginning, but on the whole, the format and goals have remained the same. These services are still planned by youth, and with youth in mind. Every week, the planning team, made up of high school students, university students and adult advisors, meets to share a meal and to prepare for the month's service. They choose a theme, balancing the school calendar and the church calendar, and delve into scripture to listen for God's word on the subject. They then develop skits and readings to express and interpret the month's theme. The praise band also meets weekly to choose and rehearse songs appropriate to the theme. The band has an eclectic take on praise music, using and reinterpreting old familiar hymns, introducing newer songs by popular Christian artists and, recently, writing their own songs. These two groups not only prepare and provide an atmosphere of worship that brings glory to God, but also small group settings where youth can share and discuss their own faith. These settings build Christian community by developing relationships and gifts among the youth and helping youth and leaders live more fully for God. – *Katie Munnik is the director of youth worship for the Presbytery of Ottawa.*





Top: Darlene McLeod and Pollyanna Versteeg perform a worship skit. Below: Michelle Ball on violin and Michael Munnik on bazouki.



For most of my life it was the only thing I knew. I went through a lot of hell. I went through drug withdrawals and having no place to live. I went through most of my life having nothing. LOFT Community Services helped me get off the streets because they cared and they didn't want me to change. They didn't tell me that I had to get off the street, but they were there when I was ready to make the move. I came to McEwan House because they accepted me as I was and gave me the support I needed. I respect them for that.

LOFT community services

www.loftcs.org

To find out more about LOFT Community Services' values and work, or to make a donation, visit our website at www.loftcs.org or call Irene at 416 979 1994, ext. 222. You can make a difference.

205 RICHMOND ST. W., SUITE 301, TORONTO, ON M5V 1V3 416 979 1994



An opportunity to share

Mission is also about learning and fundraising



Left: Devin Walker "shops in the marketplace." Above: Christopher Walker helps a young missionary make a poster for Towards A World Without AIDS project.

BY ANNE PHILLIPS

Rev. Dr. Glen Davis was the interim minister at St. Andrew's-Chalmers, Uxbridge, Ont., last year. During that time he was also leader for a mission trip to Malawi. In December, Glen spoke at a Saturday morning breakfast about his trip; what he observed of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and how the church is responding. This event was open to the community and many people from outside the congregation attended and were moved by Glen's presentation.

In February, the Sunday school used the children's mission study for the entire month and many members of the congregation became involved. Each week a member of the congregation told the story of Grace Chikulu to the children. They took the role of Grace, a friend, or a member of the church who came to assist the family. The children were completely engrossed in the telling of the story—almost as if the person telling the story was really the person whose role they were playing. Each week following the story, and after a question period, the children moved through a different centre—making instruments; learning to make soccer balls and other crafts; and in the marketplace, tasting food from Malawi, learning how to shop and barter for goods. One Sunday the children made chocolate suckers, as fundraisers, to sell to the congregation. Within a few minutes of the start of coffee hour, we were sold out. The month culminated with the children marching into the sanctuary, playing the instruments they had created and singing an African hymn. There was an opportunity for the children to share what they had learned about the AIDS pandemic in Malawi with the congregation.

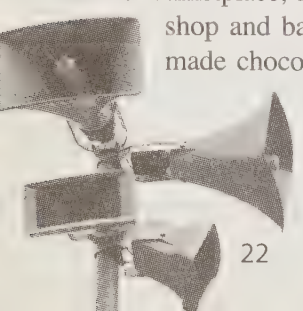
The WMS ladies in the congregation have always been very supportive of the Sunday school mission projects and this year was no exception. The WMS created a banner for the Sunday school project and also participated by using the adult study.

THE RESULTS

- The whole congregation became educated about the HIV/AIDS pandemic—it wasn't just a Sunday school project
- Children told their parents they didn't want to miss a week of Sunday school while we were learning about Malawi
- Sunday school teachers looked forward to the month and had fun preparing for it
- Members of the congregation wanted to sign up to be shepherds for our Leading with Care program and several regretted they hadn't signed up for February when everyone was having so much fun in Sunday school
- Members of the WMS studied about HIV/AIDS and once again were financially supportive of the children's mission project
- The Sunday school children raised over $1,600 for the Towards a World without AIDS campaign
- The congregation, in the midst of a fund raising campaign for major building repairs, committed 10 per cent of what was raised to the Towards a World Without AIDS campaign—a total of $26,000

Even though we were not able to travel to Malawi, we learned, adults and children, about the HIV/AIDS pandemic and how we, as a church, can respond to the needs of our sisters and brothers living with AIDS. – *Anne Phillips is a member of at St. Andrew's-Chalmers, Uxbridge, Ont. and senior administrator for the Life and Mission* Agency.

To order a study book for the congregation and the Sunday school please go to www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd



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PWSDevelopments

a newsletter of Presbyterian World Service & Development Fall 2006



Enough for All

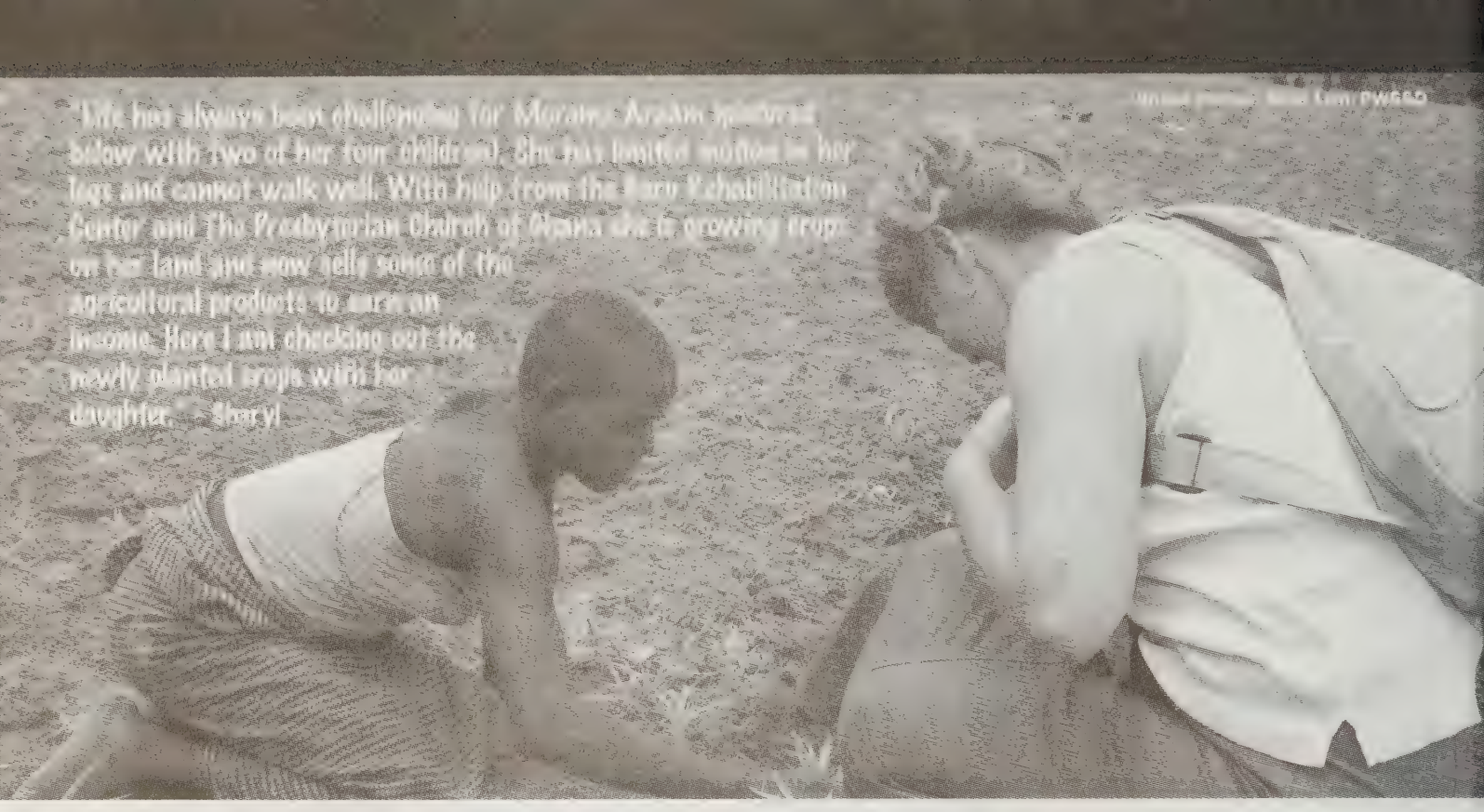
The sound of the school bell echoes across the plastic sheets and temporary huts of the Hassa Hissa camp, bringing with it the sound of hope.

Amid the trauma of conflict and displacement, the school offers a healing routine for the children and an opportunity to break the cycle of ignorance that helps fuel war. When the bell rings, the children, who are among the 24,000 internally displaced people living in this camp in Zalingei, West Darfur, abandon whatever they are doing to stream into the classrooms.

God designed the world so that there would be enough for all. Yet, many people do not have access to even the basic requirements of life: clean water, enough to eat, access to education. PWS&D is working with partners around the world to restore life as God intended by supporting communities in times of conflict and disaster; strengthening communities and leaders to ensure locally based sustainable development and working together against injustice so that all will have enough.

Schoolgirls at the Hassa Hissa camp for internally displaced people in Darfur, Sudan. The school is run by Sudan Council of Churches with the support of ACT-Caritas. Across Darfur, ACT-Caritas and its partners have set up 11 temporary schools and are building nine new schools. Almost 10,000 students are in school because of ACT-Caritas.

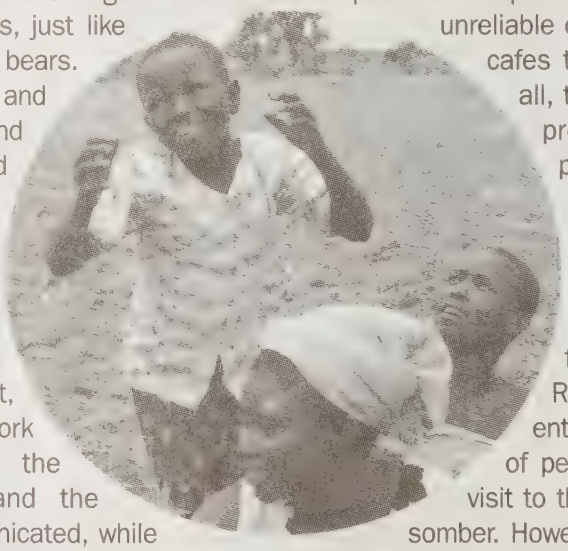
photos: Gillian Sanford, ACT



First hand experience

Africa won't leave me. It's like when I've watched a thought-provoking documentary, and I wake up the next morning thinking about a specific scene or person. Even weeks later an event will trigger a memory. Africa is like that for me.

I knew nothing about the countries of Ghana or Nigeria and went looking for dry plains and elephants, just like visitors to Canada look for snow and polar bears. Instead I found lush green countrysides and large cities with major harbours, traffic and lots of chicken, sheep and goats. I expected to find hopelessness and despair, instead I found people working hard to overcome poverty for themselves and their communities.



Travelling with Bella Lam, PWS&D Program Coordinator for Africa and the Middle East, I observed how closely PWS&D staff work with our partners to ensure that the accountability required by PWS&D and the Government of Canada is clearly communicated, while at the same time learning first-hand of partners' challenges and frustrations.

In Nigeria, being able to switch between modern and traditional is part of daily routine. Something as simple as navigating the roads is a daily challenge. I listened to women educating communities about political rights, share the challenges of working together without dependable public transportation and unsafe road systems. I can still see Nnenna, dressed in her office suit, removing her shoes to wade through the "red mud lake" that covered the road in order to reach the office of Presbyterian Community Service & Development (the relief and development arm of The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria).

Beyond the challenge of just getting to work, there is the patience required to use modern equipment with unreliable electricity and having to go to internet cafes to access emails. But rising above it all, the staff were friendly, welcoming and professional, making our stay very pleasant.

In Ghana we met strong, proud individuals looking positively into the future, even in the midst of hardship. John Alo, the new Project Director for the Garu Community Based Rehabilitation Program, was very enthusiastic about transforming the lives of people with disabilities. In contrast, our visit to the Gambaga Outcast Home was more somber. However, the sense of community between the women of Gambaga was evident, and the Christian concern of the staff provided by the Presbyterian Church in Ghana with PWS&D's support was moving.

I have included just a few snapshots of the people I met. Just like a good documentary, I hope that these first-hand accounts will be thought provoking and challenge you to learn more about PWS&D and support the work being done in Africa, Asia and the Americas.

- Sharyl Eaglesham, PWS&D Committee member visited Nigeria and Ghana in August 2006

Looking to the future in Central America

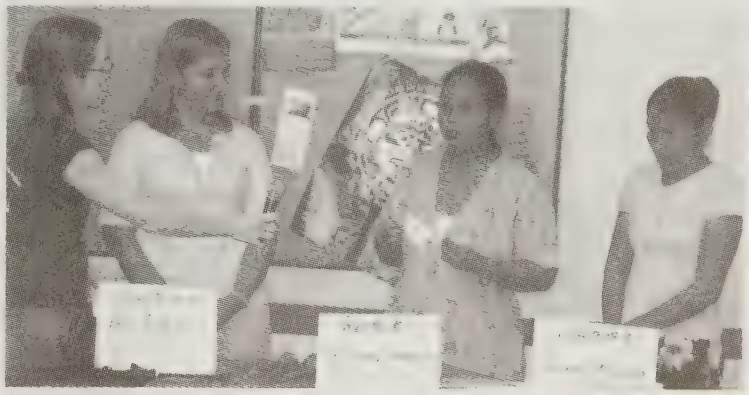
Partners of three Canadian churches—Anglican, Presbyterian and United—gathered in San Salvador for three days in August to share experiences in the fight against poverty. This unique ecumenical effort was made possible with a financial contribution from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

Fifty-eight men and women, from twenty-two organizations in Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras and El Salvador, discussed issues related to food security, community violence, peace building, sustainable community-based economic initiatives, the environment, resource extraction and disaster response. The conference provided a place to discuss the challenges and opportunities on the horizon in the region.

Daniel Arsenault, the Government of Canada's Head of Development for Guatemala, El Salvador and Belize, presented CIDA's current development priorities in Central America. He recognized the importance of the churches' extensive networks in providing first hand information about the status of communities, which becomes particularly important in times of disasters.

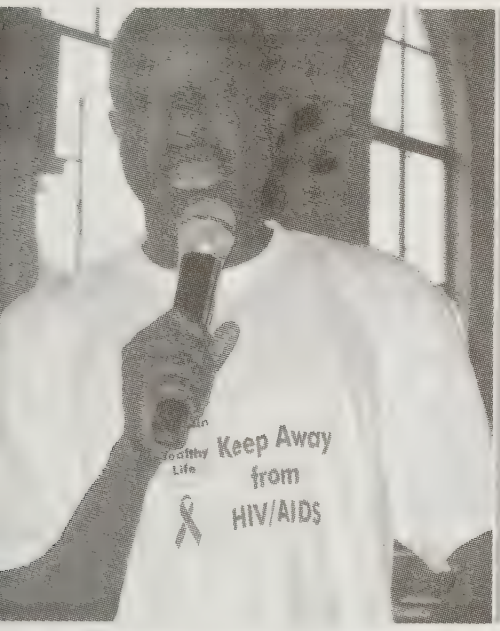
The wealth of information shared was formulated into plans to strengthen work in the future. Various alliances were formed between partners and Canadian churches committed to finding new ways to collaborate. PWS&D partner Catarina Morales from Guatemala expressed her appreciation for the event: "We will return home with renewed energy to carry on with our work."

Photo: Guy Smagghe, PWS&D



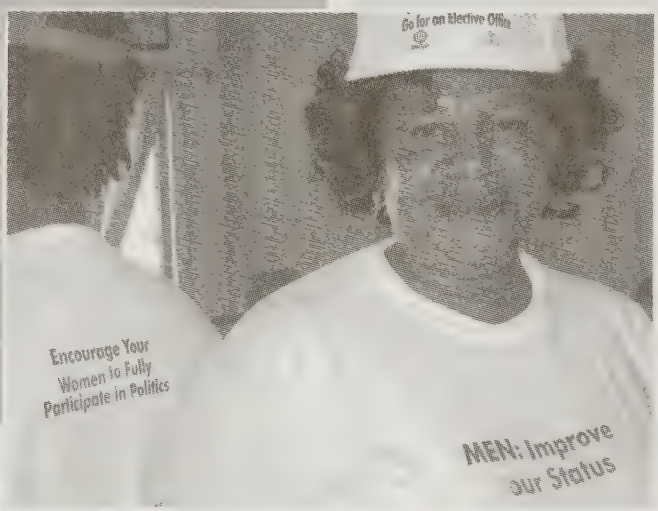
Drama helped participants share experiences and vision for the future.

Snapshots from Sharyl and Bella . . .



Fighting AIDS in Nigeria
The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria is raising awareness of HIV and AIDS with training among church members in four synods. Workshops equip ministers and elders to use sermons and counselling to educate their churches and communities on HIV and AIDS. As you can imagine, there are some lively discussions on this subject!

Empowering Women in Nigeria
These women, equipped by The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, are working to build democracy by encouraging women to participate in politics and run for elected office. They are an enthusiastic, forward thinking group struggling with traditional women's roles and family expectations. Obongawan Akpan plans to run as a councillor in her state's elections in 2007. What great energy they had!





Supporting Outcasts in Ghana Our visit to Gambaga Outcast home revealed a collection of women who have been cast out from their community. Labeled as 'witches' many of the women are poor, illiterate or disabled. Sheta Bugri (35), pictured here, had just arrived four days earlier. Her face still swollen, she told us of being accused of making her brother-in-law's niece sick. She had been beaten by her community before being brought to the compound. Like many of the women here, she is unable to return home and is separated from her six children. Despite the somberness, there were signs of hope in seeing how outcast women are helping each other to improve their living conditions with the support of the Presbyterian Church in Ghana and PWS&D.



Alexandra Lee, from Thornhill Presbyterian Church, joined Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Mette-Marit of Norway to open an exhibit of children's letters. The letters from around the globe asked world leaders to keep their promises on AIDS.

Presbyterians call for action at International AIDS Conference

Presbyterians from Canada, Malawi, Nigeria, Kenya and India joined the call for action at the International AIDS Conference held in Toronto August 13-18, 2006.

Alexandra Lee and Mia Sams, two children from Thornhill Presbyterian Church, together with Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Mette-Marit of Norway, opened an exhibit of letters to world leaders written by children and teenagers around the globe asking them to keep their promises related to HIV and AIDS. Lee and Sams' letters to Prime Minister Stephen Harper were selected for the exhibit out of thousands of letters written in more than 60 countries. The letters are part of an AIDS education and advocacy campaign coordinated by the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance —of which PWS&D is a member.

"I truly believe that young people are our chance to shape the future. We need their enthusiasm, energy and creativity," said the Crown Princess, a UNAIDS Special Representative.



Laifolo Dakishoni, from Ekwendeni Hospital's AIDS and agriculture programs in Malawi, presents a paper on helping provide food for orphans at the International AIDS Conference.

Alexandra Lee was moved to tears as she read her letter, inspired by The Presbyterian Church in Canada's Learning/Sharing project *Meeting Friends in Malawi — A Special Focus on HIV/AIDS*. Lee called on the Prime Minister to act on HIV and AIDS.

"You have made many wonderful promises, so wonderful it could help tons of people. However, some of your promises haven't happened yet," Lee read. "I know you are probably very busy with all your work, but it is my dream that someday we will find a cure."

Presbyterians also presented their findings at the conference. Laifalo Dakishoni and Esther Lupafya from Malawi presented their work on providing sustainable food solutions for orphans. Rev. Okechukwu Iro from Nigeria presented on the role of the church in providing HIV and AIDS services.

Rev. Dianne Ollerenshaw and Rev. Rick Fee served as chaplains throughout the conference.

Leading up to the conference, leaders from the 20 Canadian church denominations belonging to the Canadian Council of Churches wrote to



Youth carrying banners at the International AIDS Conference . The series of nine banners expressed a call from people of faith for access to treatment for all, to close the funding gap now and to end stigma and discrimination in english, french and spanish.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper calling for action to "address the issues at the root of this pandemic—the source of so much suffering and death".

This historic letter, representational of 85% of the Christian community in Canada, called on Canada to take the initiative in six key areas to help fight HIV and AIDS. These include debt cancellation, ending forced privatization of health care in the developing world, increasing Canadian contributions to the Global Fund against Malaria, Tuberculosis and AIDS, amending Canada's pharmaceutical laws and committing to addressing fundamental gender and age inequalities that fuel the pandemic. (For a copy of the letter, go to www.ccc-cce.ca/english/justice/hiv.htm.) To learn more about advocating on these issues go to www.kairoscanada.org.

- by Karen Plater with files from EAA



Susan McAlister, The Reverend Hugh Donnelly and Henriette de Kloet from Beaches PC ran the Toronto Waterfront Marathon on September 24, 2006 to raise funds for the *Towards a World without AIDS* campaign.

The Campaign Continues

In the past two years Presbyterians have raised over $900,000 through the *Towards a World without AIDS* campaign - over and above donations to *Presbyterians Sharing...* and PWS&D. The 2006 General Assembly voted to keep the campaign open and encouraged Presbyterians to continue to raise funds for, and awareness about, AIDS work.

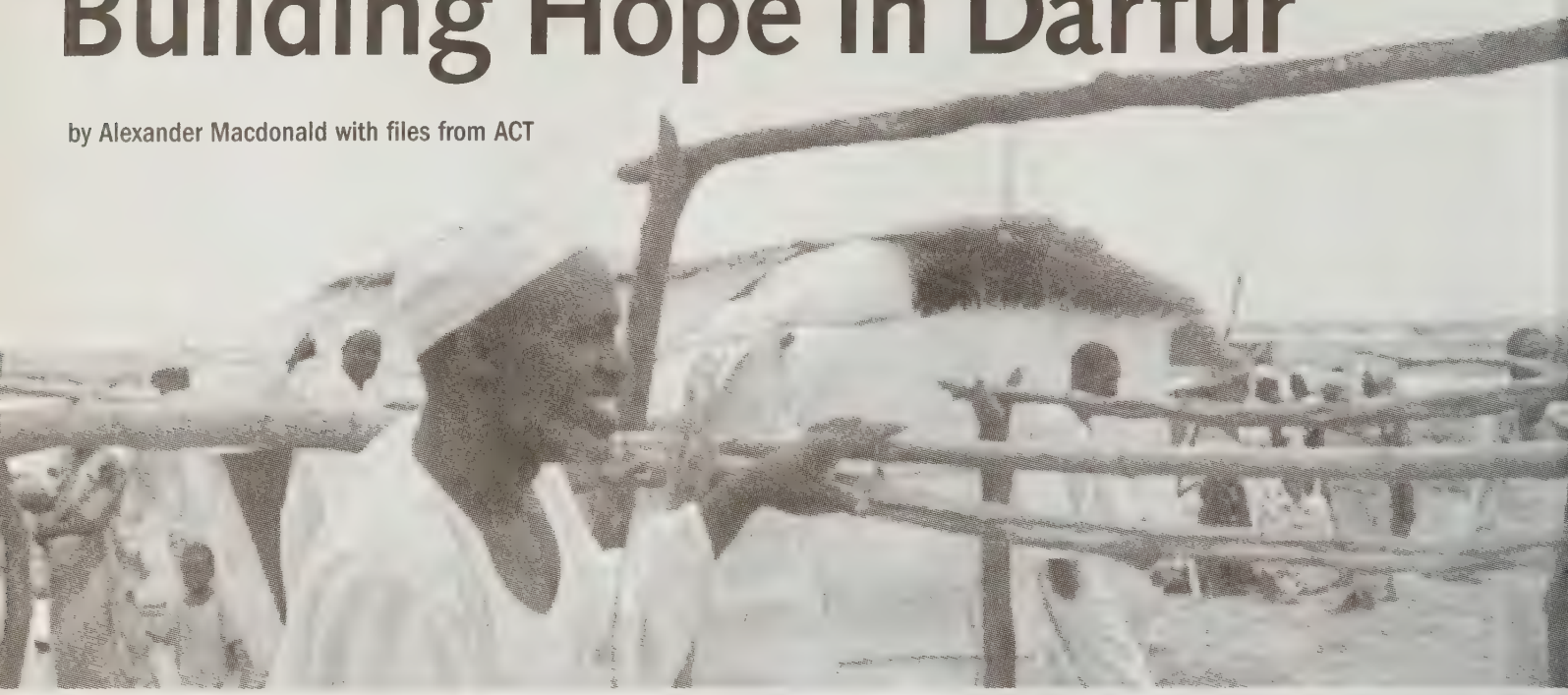
Already $798,000 has been allocated to help partners in Africa, Asia, and Central America expand their AIDS work and $89,000 has been allocated to support projects in Canada. The funds are helping prevent transmission of HIV from mother to child, provide access to HIV counselling and testing in remote communities, care for orphans and vulnerable children and making accurate information on HIV accessible to everyone.

Presbyterians marched with 400 people of faith from around the world to remind people and governments to fight HIV and AIDS. Pictured are Margaret Zondo PCC staff; the Church of North India's Karuna Roy, Amrita Raj and Baruna Victor; Patricia Zerega from the USA and Dianne Ollerenshaw, PWS&D Committee.



Building Hope in Darfur

by Alexander Macdonald with files from ACT



Insecurity has continued to escalate in the Darfur region of Sudan despite the signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement. "On the radio, they say, 'Peace is coming, peace is coming,' but here on the ground there is no peace," says Asha, a young girl in the El Neem camp for the internally displaced.

Since the outbreak of violence in 2003 over 200,000 people have died and over two million displaced from their homes. Many have lost friends and family. Their property, crops, livestock and entire livelihoods have been destroyed. Death from preventable diseases is very high in this transient, desolate environment. It is dangerous to leave the camps to do anything. And so, people try to forge some form of life in the harsh confines of the camps.

PWS&D and other members of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB) have sent lifesaving food shipments. PWS&D is also supporting the massive relief program lead jointly by Action by Churches Together (ACT) and Caritas Internationalis. Bringing together the vast majority of the humanitarian aid response of the world's Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox churches, the ACT-Caritas program is one of the largest non-governmental responses in Darfur.

ACT-Caritas have supported almost 500,000 people affected by ongoing conflict since 2004. The program, with over $16.5 million in 2006, is providing basic shelter, household items, clean water, latrines, primary health care and education to the displaced. Support is also being given to the communities outside the camps who are sheltering displaced people and are just as poor. Some of the accomplishments include 10,000 students attending temporary schools and 21 clinics serving more than 20,000 patients a month. In addition, more than 20,000 farming families are using tools and seeds provided by ACT to generate sustenance and income.

There is still much work to be done and the needs continue to overwhelm the workers. Join the international call for peace in Darfur. Check out ecumenical advocacy efforts at www.kairoscanada.org.



Essential water

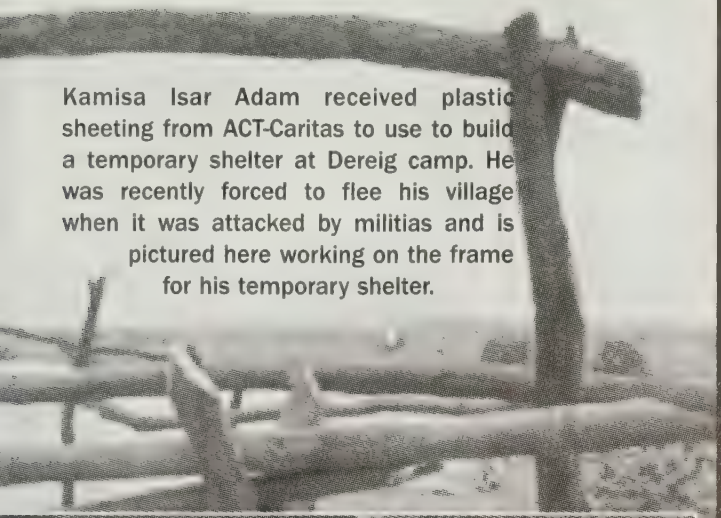
The sound of laughter is rare in the refugee camps in Darfur, Sudan. But around the well in Azirni the children play as if at a park, splashing each other with water, begging for turns at the pump, giggling when someone slips in the mud.

"This well has been very important," says Maka Abdalla. She and other residents risked attack when walking a mile and a half to draw water from a bore hole. "Life is difficult. But it was more difficult without this water."

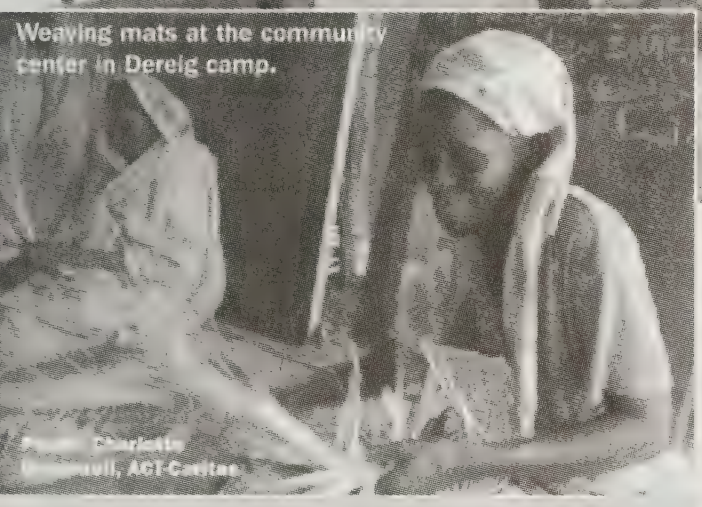
The people of Azirni are some of the 75,000 internally displaced people in Darfur who now have access to clean drinking water because of a Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB) water program. In addition ACT-Caritas has provided wells, water bladders, distribution systems, and water containers in many camps and host communities.

Photo: In the Ardabba Camp water for some 3,000 displaced families is provided through a system built by ACT/Caritas. Photo: Paul Jeffrey, ACT

Photo: Melissa Engle ,EAA



Kamisa Isar Adam received plastic sheeting from ACT-Caritas to use to build a temporary shelter at Dereig camp. He was recently forced to flee his village when it was attacked by militias and is pictured here working on the frame for his temporary shelter.



Weaving mats at the community center in Dereig camp.

Photo: Charlotte Cornwall, ACT-Caritas

A place to heal

A hum of gentle chatter radiates through the open doors of the community centre as fingers expertly weave palm leaves into mats, guide material through a sewing machine, turn dough into pasta or craft a bed. A sense of hope is in the air.

Community centers run by ACT-Caritas in eleven camps in Darfur are helping people overcome trauma. Offering a wide range of activities, the centers help survivors learn new skills they can use to earn an income, while at the same time providing a place where people can focus on life. As they work, they talk about their experiences and begin to heal.

Elizabeth Cornelio, who runs the centre in Dereig camp, explains that most "have trauma, and yet they do not know how to recognize it in others or even in their children." Special counselling at the centers help people learn how to help each other. "It is important to let them cry; crying is healing, and after they have cried, many laugh," Elizabeth explains.

The community center in Dereig camp was set up one year ago by Sudanaid, a local partner of ACT-Caritas. It has been so popular that it has been expanded to accommodate all the people who want to use it—showing this work is as essential to survival as the provision of food, water and shelter.



A 35-year-old refugee mother sits with her children outside her home in a refugee camp in Thailand. She and her family arrived after a month-long trek through the jungle. photo: UNHCR

Change a Life

They have been living for years in a remote and overcrowded refugee camp in Thailand. Having fled severe persecution, torture, imprisonment, forced labour and forced relocation in their homeland of Burma (Myanmar), they are some of the most vulnerable residents of the Mae La Oon camp.

The government of Canada has accepted to resettle eight hundred of these refugees and they are looking for help from Canadians to resettle two hundred.

The refugees are scheduled to arrive in late 2006 and early 2007 and require financial and settlement assistance from refugee sponsors for their first year in Canada. Any Presbyterian congregation is eligible to assist in this refugee sponsorship initiative. PWS&D will help with paperwork and the Government is offering a cost-sharing arrangement.

The refugees—who include former opposition leaders, people with medical conditions and people with family links in Canada—will be leaving behind a camp of 14,000 people. They have been living in bamboo shacks built on steep hillsides susceptible to landslides. Poor sanitation and lack of clean water are a constant threat to health.

The refugees are already learning about life in Canada. Upon completion of cultural orientation seminars which included geography, education, health, employment, cultural adaptation, housing, budgeting, and transit, a 76-year-old man reflected: "I do not worry about having to work hard in Canada; I only want the chance."

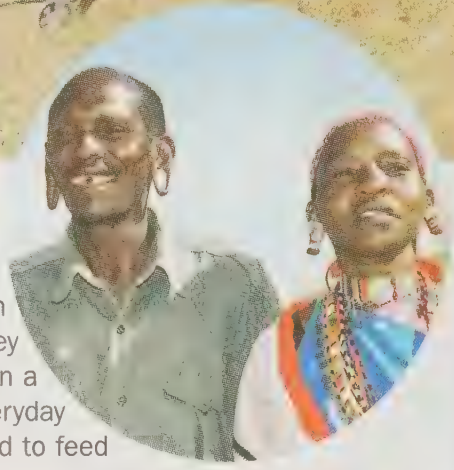
by Colleen McCue, PWS&D Refugee Coordinator

Paulina and Isaiah are farmers in Kenya working to improve their ability to produce food with the support of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

Photos: Heather Plett, CFGB



Enough Food



Paulina and Isaiah are small-scale farmers in Kenya. Their lives are full of challenges. They haven't had enough rain to grow a decent crop in a number of years. Paulina has to walk miles everyday to get water. They don't always have enough food to feed their children, or enough money to send them to school. They work extremely hard and are determined to do what they can to care for their family and community.

Paulina and Isaiah are two of the millions of small-scale farmers who struggle with hunger. Ironically, of the 800 million people in the world who are hungry, two-thirds are involved in the production, processing and marketing of food and agriculture products.

Paulina and Isaiah are receiving seeds and tools through a Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB) program to help them improve their ability to produce food and care for their family. When Presbyterian farmers, growing projects or individuals give to the CFGB it goes into a PWS&D account. PWS&D can use the equity in that account—with matching funds from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)—to address hunger issues with our partners. Our work through the CFGB is about more than just distributing food, it is about improving people's ability to grow or purchase food and working toward communities where all have enough to eat.

- by Karen Plater with files from Heather Plett

In 2005 congregations and individuals donated $1,307,861 in cash and grain to PWS&D's account at the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. With contributions from other CFGB members, and matching grants from CIDA, PWS&D was the lead agency for programs worth over $5 million. PWS&D is currently using our equity in the CFGB to support food programs in Malawi, Nicaragua, Tanzania, Kenya, Liberia, Sudan and Pakistan. Activities include:

Food aid: providing food to reduce hunger and malnutrition and protect and build livelihoods, particularly in times of emergencies

Food security: supporting the efforts of households and communities to grow or purchase the food they need

Food justice: advocating for national and international policies that will reduce and eliminate hunger

Nutrition: improving nutrition through micro-nutrient fortification, nutrition education and a reduction in diseases that contribute to malnutrition

Seeds: providing seeds in support of local farming efforts.

For more information or to make a donation contact:
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This educational resource is produced twice a year by PWS&D with financial support from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

Editor: Karen Plater, PWS&D

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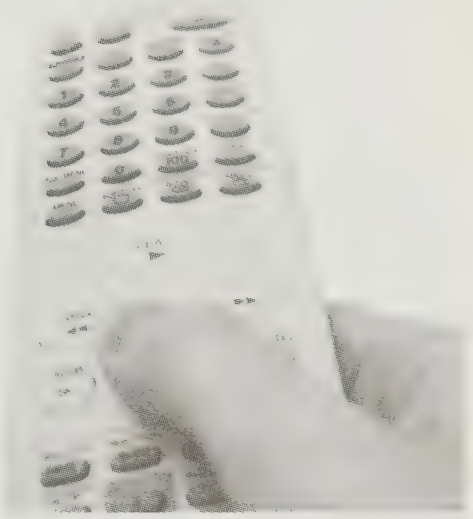
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Bart Simpson doesn't read the Bible

The word is dead. Long live the Word

BY BLAIR BERTRAND



It was a pretty typical youth group meeting. We were having a discussion and I introduced what I thought was a pretty well known biblical passage. When I received glazed eye stares from the group, I asked if they indeed did know the passage. One honest young man said, "Dude, you can't possibly expect me to know that Bible story. With the amount of Simpsons that I watch, I don't have any brain space left for reading." And he was correct. He watched so much TV and read so little that his brain couldn't grasp what I was asking him to do.

According to a 2003 survey done by the Canadian Teachers' Federation, 75 per cent of grade 9 students watch TV daily and 50 per cent of those boys will also play a video game every day. Over 90 per cent of grade 9s will watch a few DVDs in a month with over half watching movies a few times a week. Video, a term that covers pretty much everything that appears on a screen, dominates the adolescent life. Reading a book not for school? Around 20 per cent of grade 9 girls will read almost every day but this does not balance out the close to 60 per cent of grade 9 boys who will never read a book outside of school assuming that they do some of the reading for their classes. Bart triumphs over the Bard in almost every instance.

Recent neurological research indicates that adolescence is a time when our brains are literally expanding. The environment we are in physically shapes our brain, making some connections and breaking others. A steady diet of either reading books or watching video means that our brains take on different shapes, leading us to interpret and understand the world differently. Books shape us to see the word more rationally, more linearly, and more analytically because these are some of the strengths of print. Video, on the other hand, shapes us to be more experiential, more episodic and more relational. Youth raised on a steady of diet of video understand the world differently than those raised on regular servings of the printed word.

Somehow the church has missed this fundamental shift when we go to engage Scripture. For instance, our worship services still focus on the strengths of the printed word. Our near obsession with "decently and in good order" gets translated into linear analytic rationality. We read the Bible, out loud, and then explain it. We may have moved past three point sermons in an attempt to escape linearity but even the more narrative forms of preaching that we promote with varying degrees of success are still based on the basic structure of the printed novel. Even contemporary approaches to worship don't really solve the fundamental problem. Power Point is a more efficient and contemporary way of presenting a logical argument but it still assumes that people understand God in a rational, linear and analytic way.

The Emergent church movement, and the alt.worship community in general, at least have begun to grapple with this shift. Their worship incorporates the Bible but is heavily experiential, episodic and relational. Worship services might incorporate a DJ spinning records in the corner, mashing and overlaying Gregorian chants with electronic trance music to create a contemplative mood. Instead of sitting in pews facing forward soaking up the presentation of the word, the people gathered might move between different stations, experiencing different Scriptures through various activities as the Spirit moves them to. Most Emergent worship has a heavy art component. One service I attended gave all who entered the sanctuary space a sketch book and pastels or markers. As the service progressed people sketched and expressed their reaction to the Scriptures. Before the end, people shared with others their reactions, forming an entirely different interpretative community than we normally experience.

Scripture continues to witness to the Living Word in Emergent worship gatherings but is not limited by the printed words on the page. Rather, Emergent communities assume that the dominant way people relate to the world has been heavily conditioned by video. This assumption may scare those who don't see the world that way but if the Word really is Living then we should not fear changing our basic assumptions. Instead we should rejoice that God continues to work through Scripture to speak to each new generation. The word is dead! Long live the Word!

Rev. Blair Bertrand is the associate minister for children, youth and families at St. Andrew's, Brampton, Ont. This is the third of three articles, the first of which appeared in September's CY06 coverage.

PHOTO: ©ISTOCKPHOTO.COM/JOHANNA GOODYEAR

Sharks ahoy!

As children grow up, so do the parents

Ever since he was knee-high to a Doberman, the boy was fearless. Take him to the ocean and he'd jump in looking for sharks. Take him to the mountains and he'd see how high he could climb. One day when he was five, I watched in horror as he jumped off a roof—a garbage-bag parachute duct-taped to his back. We couldn't be more opposite, my son and I. I believe God put us on dry land and said, "Lo, I am with you always." Not Stephen. The higher he climbs, the more he believes God is with him.

In his first year of college he called one night to ask me for money. "I'm sorry," I said. "You have reached this number in error. Please hang up and call your Uncle Dan."

"I scaled a 300-foot cliff today," he said, undaunted. "You'd have loved it."

Right. His father who contracts vertigo standing on an ottoman.

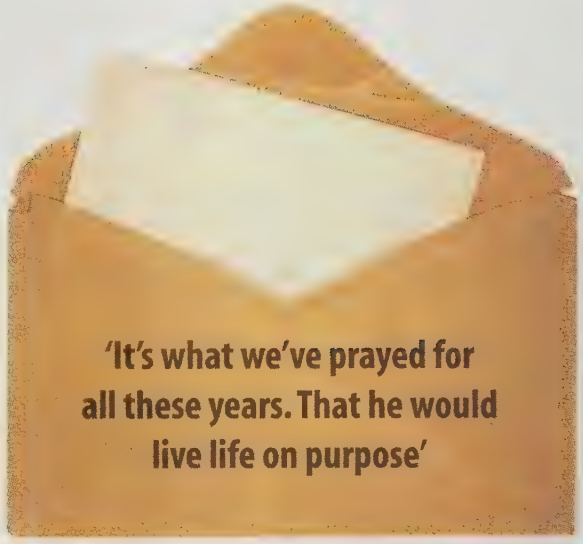
For years, I've wondered what God would make of our son. Would he call him to be a helicopter test pilot? A professional bungee-jumper? A clown? Or would he fulfill every North American parent's dream by settling down in an enormous house with a nice wife and provide us with half a dozen grandchildren to spoil?

The unexpected answer arrived in the mail one day.

Dear Dad and Mom,
I just want you to know about recent plans and developments in my life. I met a couple of nice Mormon girls and we're planning on being married. Not really. But I did meet Lucy. You'll like her a lot. It's surprising how quickly you can find a justice of the peace down here. Lucy owns a tattoo parlor, but seldom works. Her father won some money in a lottery, so she's set for life. I won't need to work anymore either. I've bought a Mercedes convertible and you'll be happy to know I put a chrome fish on the bumper. Lucy owns a house, a summer home, and we're praying about buying a yacht.

If you haven't fainted yet, you may want to read the truth now. It may be more shocking. In the country of Uganda, the Lord's Resistance Army is committing atrocities against children that are too awful for me to put in this letter. Over the years they've abducted 50,000 kids and turned the ones they haven't murdered into soldiers. I want to go to work with street children in Kampala. I'll be living with local missionaries. It will mean lots of needles and I'll need to raise a little money too. I once heard Dad say that Jesus came to comfort us, not to make us comfortable. I guess I've been comforted enough; it's time to offer some to others.

Your son,
Steve



"Where do you think we went wrong?" I asked his mother. "Couldn't he just have a beach ministry in Hawaii?" She grinned, despite the fact she'd stuck herself with a sewing needle while I read the letter. "Maybe we blew it taking him to other countries and showing him what the real world looks like," I suggested.

"It's what we've prayed for all these years," she said. "That he would live life on purpose."

And so a few weeks ago we hugged our firstborn son until his ribs squeaked there in the airport, as he embarked on a grand adventure half a world away. It's funny the questions people ask when they hear he's going to Uganda. "Aren't you worried about his safety?" they say. And I'd be a fool not to admit that I have my moments. Check a list of the most dangerous spots on earth and Uganda nears the top. But is safety what we're here for? Isn't the most dangerous place on earth the place of complacency? Isn't Suburbia sucking the life out of more of our teenagers than any foreign country ever could?

I must be honest. There are times I'd rather Steve were staying home, making good money, putting it away for my nursing home bills. Yet I cannot hope for more than this: that my children will hear God's voice amid a noisy culture and that they will obey.

Just before he left I asked my son what he'd miss most about home. "The dog," he said, smiling. Then why is it that I saw him studying family photos and lounging on the sofa watching an old Disney movie with his brother and sister? Was he killing time? Or saying goodbye to the remnants of childhood?

I've shed a few tears, but mostly I've been giving thanks. For a son who's an updated and improved version of his father. For e-mail and cheap overseas phone rates. And I'm thankful there are no sharks in Uganda.

Phil Callaway is a popular speaker and author. Visit him online at www.philcallaway.com

PHOTO: ©ISTOCKPHOTO.COM/NICHOLAS BELTON

A rainbow at night

Hope is the ground from which real and meaningful environmental care can sprout

BY DAVID WEBBER

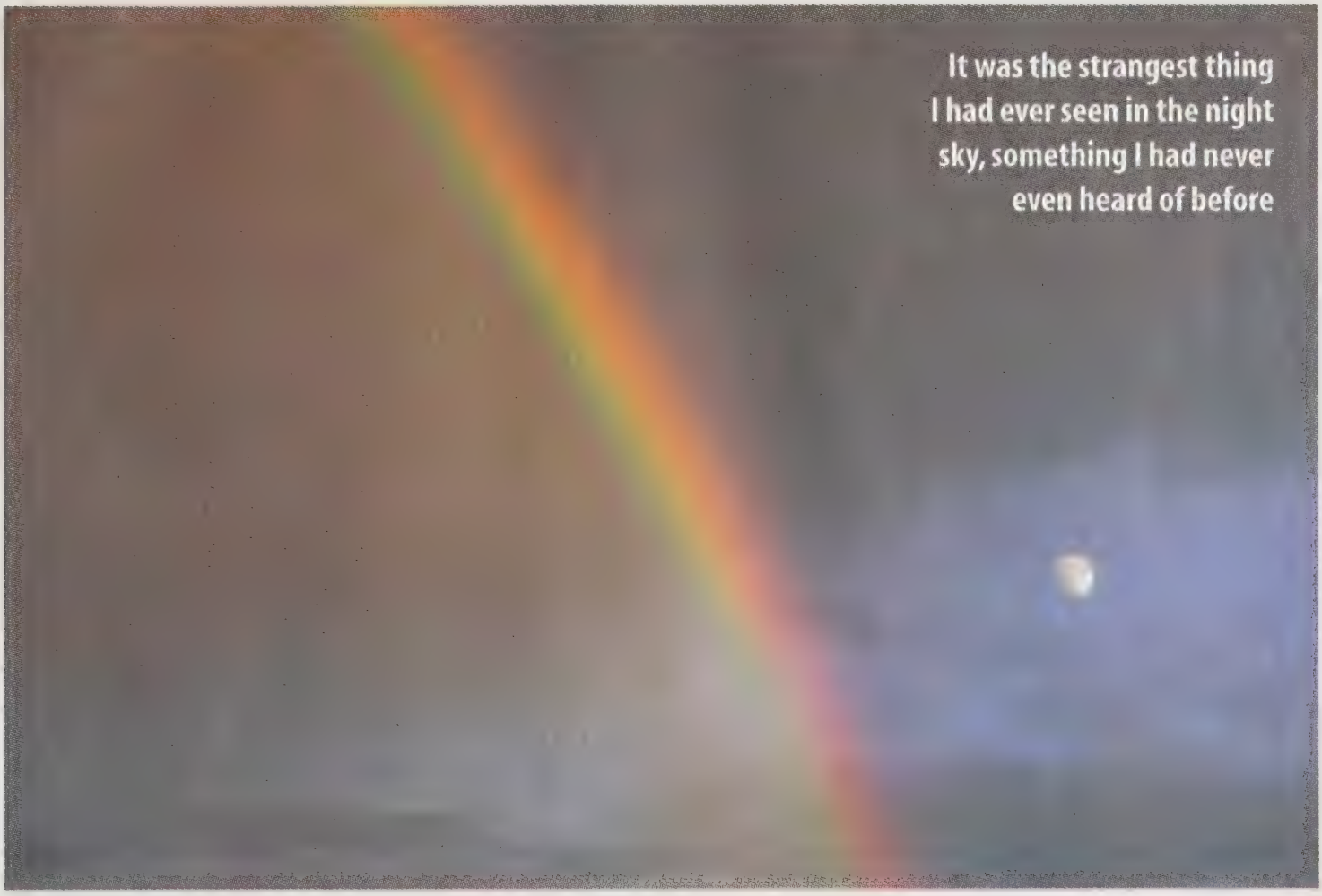


PHOTO: ©ISTOCKPHOTO.COM/AMYGDALA IMAGERY

Very late last night, as I was driving home from house church at Sheridan Lake, I saw something I have never seen before and reckon will never see again.

It was an odd night for late November. Usually by this time of the year in the Cariboo-Chilcotin region of B.C., we have snowstorms and icy winds. But last night the broad Cariboo horizon was warm, still and mostly clear. Here and there, off in the distance, were small rain skirmishes. The moon was bright and full, shining at the same time as the mini-rainstorms skittered around the horizon. It was a strange, brooding and eerie sky.

I love to watch the night sky and so I was letting my eyes drift from road to horizon and back again as I drove. And then my eyes fell on something that caused me to pull over to the side of the road and stare. Adjacent to one of the distant rain squalls was a rainbow arching almost across the sky. It was the same as a daytime rainbow. It had all the same colours except that instead of looking as though it were painted in bright acrylic on a white canvas, it was more like it was painted in very soft watercolours on a blue-black blotter. It was fully there but so soft that you almost had to look at it out of the corner of your eye to see it.

I sat and stared, not believing what my eyes beheld. I heard myself say, "Well I'll be! A night rainbow." I shook my head and rubbed my road-weary eyes, but I couldn't make it disappear. I shut down the truck, turned out the headlights and got out on the side of the road. I stood there amazed. It was the strangest thing I had ever seen in the night sky, something I had never even heard of before. Eventually, I climbed

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'The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge' (PS.19.1-2)

back into my truck and proceeded home to my bed. By the time I negotiated the gravel road to our house, the rainbow was no longer visible. I crawled into bed beside Linda and after she awoke, I told her about my night rainbow. I don't think she believed me.

This morning, the image of the night rainbow is still on my mind. To be quite frank, I am not sure what to do with it and so I am sitting at the computer keyboard seeing if I can work it out. For me, the things that I see in creation never are just naturally occurring phenomenon. I take Scripture literally and for me what I see in creation is as the psalmist says: "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge." (Ps.19.1-2)

And so this morning I ask myself, What did God say to me in the night sky on my way home? What part of His Word did he proclaim to me with that strange night rainbow? As I think about it, the one place that a rainbow figures in Scripture is in the Noah story, in Genesis. When I read it now, something startling stands out to me. I have always known the rainbow to be a peace sign from God to humanity. God hangs up His war bow in the sky, so to speak. But when I read the story just now, I see that the divine covenant of peace includes every living thing on Earth: "The rainbow shall be in the cloud and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." (Gen.9.16) To me, this suddenly seems huge.

As a person whose first vocation was in the environmental sciences, I have many friends from my former career who continually challenge me. On the one hand they accuse my Christian faith of being the underpinning of what has happened with regard to environmental degradation, blaming it on the Christian biblical understanding of subduing the earth. On the other hand, they preach a shrill doom-and-gloom apocalyptic message concerning the environment and the future.

I have been able to offer a solid biblical interpretation concerning the subduing of the earth that is helpful. However, I have never been able to come up with a suitable response to the doom-and-gloom apocalyptic message. I find environmental apocalyptic preachers to be about as helpful as Christian apocalyptic preachers. Hopelessness paralyses me. One version of the end times is about as crippling as the other. As a person genuinely concerned about the environment, how can I work to care for it, if there is no hope?

As I think about all of the doom-and-gloom environmental preaching and the paralysis it spawns, last night's rainbow becomes a stark proclamation of the Word of God. No matter how dark the skies seem with regards to creation in these present times, God's unchangeable covenant of shalom for all creation in Genesis 9 still holds true. With regards to creation, there is divine promise and divine hope. The Creator wins. This present darkness, these stormy times and those who perpetuate the destruction of the environment can never overcome creation. God's covenant rainbow glows in the darkness and the present darkness cannot overcome it. Rainbows do appear in the night and hope is the ground from which real and meaningful environmental care can sprout.

Rev. David Webber is a contributing editor to the *Record*. He is a minister of the Cariboo, B.C. house church ministry. His most recent book is *Like a Winter's Aspen: Embracing the Creator's Fire.*



Presbyterian College faculty and students annual retreat at Val Morin, in the Laurentians.

Education feature

Preparing students for modern ministry

By Nancy Devine

Tara Bentall King, co-ordinator of student recruitment at the Vancouver School of Theology, recently attended a conference on spirituality in the Pacific Northwest.

"The areas around Vancouver and Washington State are becoming increasingly secularized, with no specific religious affiliations," she says. "At the conference, we discussed it in terms of an emerging trend. As religious educators, this is an exciting thing really."

She adds that if the West coast is a cradle for a more secular spirituality, it presents VST with an opportunity to engage students in the fine art of working in a society that is increasingly non-Christian, while remaining true to the Gospel and the teachings of Jesus Christ.

It's a challenge facing all schools in the 21st century, says Dr. John Vissers, principal of Presbyterian College in Montreal, and faculty lecturer in Theology in the McGill University faculty of Religious Studies. In addition to studying in a richly diverse collegial setting, third-year ministry students take a mandatory seven- to 10-day mission trip so they can experience the church in a different culture.

This year, the group will study at a seminary in Cuba.

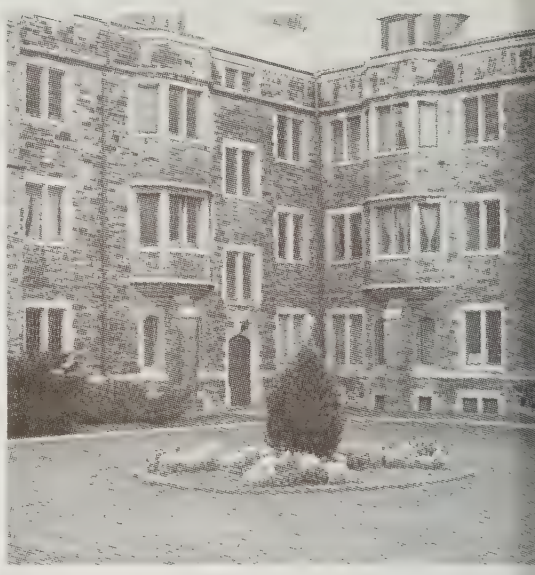
"As they interact with the students and faculty there, we get them to think about

what it means to see the church in a different context," he says. "Most of them find the experience valuable. For some, it becomes the touchstone of their preparation for ministry, for the way they frame their vision of the church in the world. It is a practical lesson in mission—that it is not so much what *we* do in the world, but what God is doing in the world."

And it helps them understand the role of the church in a society that this not necessarily Christian.

"This is certainly part of the college's discussion, curriculum and planning," he says. "The school itself is situated in a bilingual, multicultural and multifaith university, and the work the students are doing brings them up against the reality that Christianity is no longer the dominant religion in Canadian society. We see this as a vibrant post-Christian context."

At Knox College in Toronto, students are also exposed and engaged in a richly diverse environment, says Dr. Dorcas Gordon, principal and associate professor of Biblical interpretation.



Residences at University of Toronto's Knox College.

Something Old

Something New

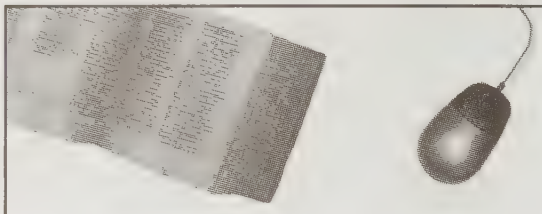
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"Most of them find the experience valuable. For some, it becomes the touchstone of their preparation for ministry, for the way they frame their vision of the church in the world. It is a practical lesson in mission—that it is not so much what we do in the world, but what God is doing in the world"

"The students learn the traditions of the Presbyterian church, as well as the skills they will need for congregational and public ministry. There is racial and ethnic diversity in every class, and the rich diversity at the University of Toronto is such a dynamic opportunity to broaden an understanding of the ministry in the world."

It is, she adds, a far cry from an old time Religions of the World course, which often only scratched the surface of religious diversity—looking at entire belief systems in abstracts and out of meaningful context.

"The students who will work in ordained ministry will be working in incredibly religiously diverse settings, and so we want to prepare them to understand the religious diversity in your neighbourhood, in the context of daily life."

The schools focus on preparing students of all aspects of ordained ministry in the Presbyterian Church, including Biblical studies and pastoral skills. The face of the student body is changing—there are fewer wrinkles.

"About 10 to 15 years ago, the average student was a women in middle age studying for a second career," says Bentall King. "More and more, we are seeing younger people. But even

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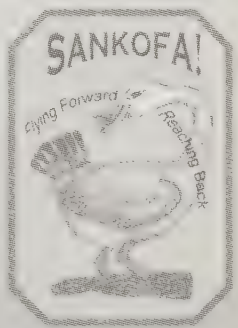
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there, there is diversity. In some classes, there are 24-year-olds and 60-year-olds. It poses a challenge, but it is also an excellent setting for learning."

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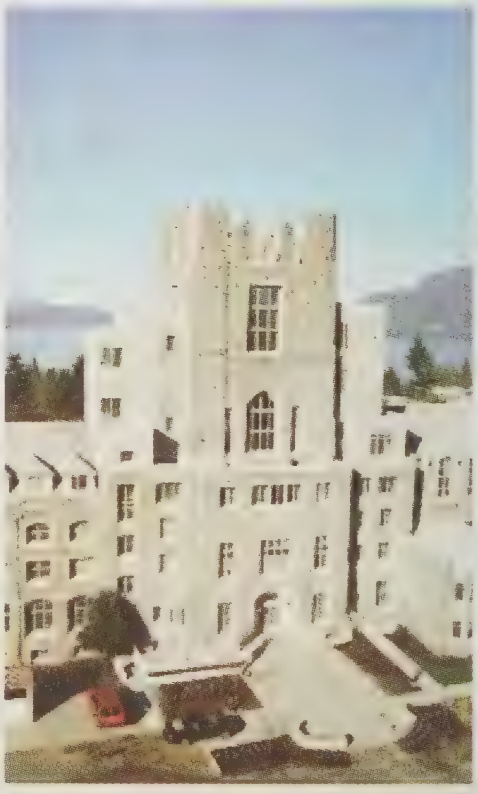
In addition to a Master of Divinity; Native Ministries MDiv by Extension; MA in Theological Studies; Master of Theology; PhD (in conjunction with the University of Wales); there are also diplomas in Christian studies, denominational studies and spiritual direction.

Bentall King notes summer school programs are also becoming increasingly popular, for those who want to spend their summer holidays learning. The Chalmers Institute at VST offers continuing education courses and workshops throughout the year and at a four-week summer school in July.

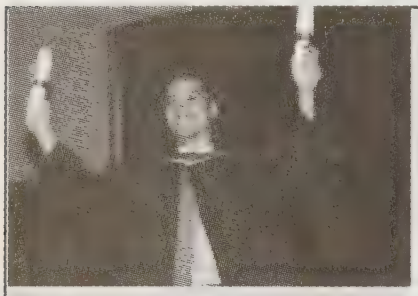
VST's visiting distinguished scholar program invites guest lecturers from around the world for engaging and enlightening seminars and workshops.

"Last summer (2006), at summer school, we had Dr. John Dominic Crossan as our visiting scholar," she says. "Next year, our visiting distinguished scholars will be Dr. John Cobb Jr., Dr. Rosemary Ruether, Father Thomas Keating, Rev. Dr. Cynthia Bourgeault and the Very Reverend Alan Jones."

The school also conducts periodic pilgrimages to various sites around the world. Next summer, the pilgrimage will be to the Rhine Valley and southern England.



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"The programs were developed for those who may not feel called to the ministry of word and sacrament, but want to explore other possibilities, to deepen their under standing of the Christian tradition in order to live their faith more effectively"

"It is called "Singing Heart," and it runs for two weeks in the middle of the summer," says Bentall King. "It is also possible for it to be taken for degree credit with added readings and assignments."

The Presbyterian College is a theological College of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, a member of the McGill University Consortium of theological colleges, and affiliated with the Faculty of Religious Studies, McGill University. Both are accredited by the Association of Theological Schools.

Dr. Vissers says that in addition to increasing enrolment, there is also an increase in the number of people doing distance learning through the college.

"The lay education program is continuing to do well," he says. "We have had a group of lay people from Cape Breton studying with us. They have come here, and faculty have gone there. This is helping them prepare to be effective lay leaders in rural areas that may not have paid congregational leadership."

Congregations benefit from an educated and engaged laity, says Dr. Gordon. At Knox, the Ewart Centre for lay education offers a certificate in Christian faith and life. An undergraduate degree is not required. The courses are offered for interest or the certificate.

"The programs were developed for those who may not feel called to the ministry of word and sacrament, but want to explore other possibilities, to deepen their understanding of the Christian tradition in order to live their faith more effectively," she says.

The continuing education component extends to those who are also working in ordained ministry.

"We expect our students to be lifelong learners, so from time to time we offer workshops, seminars and lectures in conjunction with Emmanuel College," says Dr. Gordon. "There is so much need for education in clergy care, congregation health, and these events give us the opportunity to learn new things and try new approaches."

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"We are learning things that are beginning to change our understanding of ourselves," says Dr. Gordon. "We are living in a big world and we are called to be ministers in new and different ways." – *Nancy Devine is a freelance writer.* ■



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obituaries

BODKIN, Rev. John Alexander, was born on October 27, 1941 in St. Thomas, Ont., the second born of twin sons. John's early education happened in Brockville, Ont. He studied at Ottawa's Teacher College and began a career in teaching.

Feeling the call to ministry, John resigned his dearly loved teaching profession and continued with his studies at Sir George Williams University (now Concordia) and Presbyterian College graduating in 1969. He was ordained to the ministry by the Presbytery of Brockville in May 1969.

John served The Presbyterian Church in Canada for 37 years, first as a student minister then as an ordained missionary and finally as a parish minister. He served congregations in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta and British Columbia. For health reasons, John took early retirement in 2001 from his position as senior minister of St. John's Church, White Rock, B.C. Respected as a gifted preacher and teacher, John passed away on June 16, 2006.

BROOKES, Horace, aged 85 of First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont.

GEORGE, Marjory, aged 93 and a long time member of First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont.

GOWLAND, Isabel, suddenly on Monday, June 5, 2006, in her 86th year. Loving wife of the late Rev. Dr. Arthur J. Gowland, mother of Joan Wood (late Ian), Ruth Millar (Bryce) and the late Mary Reeves; loving grandmother of the Wood, Millar and Reeves children.

Isabel was a member and elder of White Oak, Mississauga, Ont., and a member of St. Andrew's, Streetsville, Ont., WMS. She served with her husband at Knox, St. Mary's, Ont.; Knox, Calgary; Dufferin Street, Toronto; Queen St. East, Toronto; and Knox, Oshawa, Ont. Through her leadership of CGIT, children's groups and WMS, she touched the lives of many and will be remembered for her strong Christian faith, her kindness and her wonderful sense of humour.

MCGUIRE, Dorothy, aged 84 and a long time member of First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont.

MCINTRYE, Archie, aged 88 and member of First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont.

QUINN, Mrs. Rita, the widow of Rev. Wes Quinn, died on June 13, 2006. Over the last several years, Rita worshipped at First, Winnipeg.

ROYCE, Sheila, long-time faithful member and elder of Knox, Dundas, Ont., died on Wednesday, June 21, 2006. Her love for God and her service to her church were a witness to us all.

SPECK, Eleanor Carol, long time member and choir member of St. John's, Port Perry, Ont., died July 5, 2006.

TERRY, Albert James, aged 93 and long time member of St. John's, Port Perry, Ont., died August 27, 2006.

WILKINS, Robert, aged 80 and member of First, Chatham, Ont.

Rate for obituary notices: $1 per word or $55 per column inch (the lower amount) plus GST.

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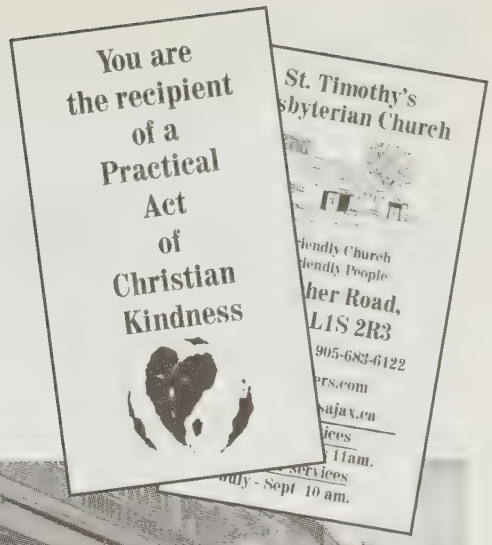
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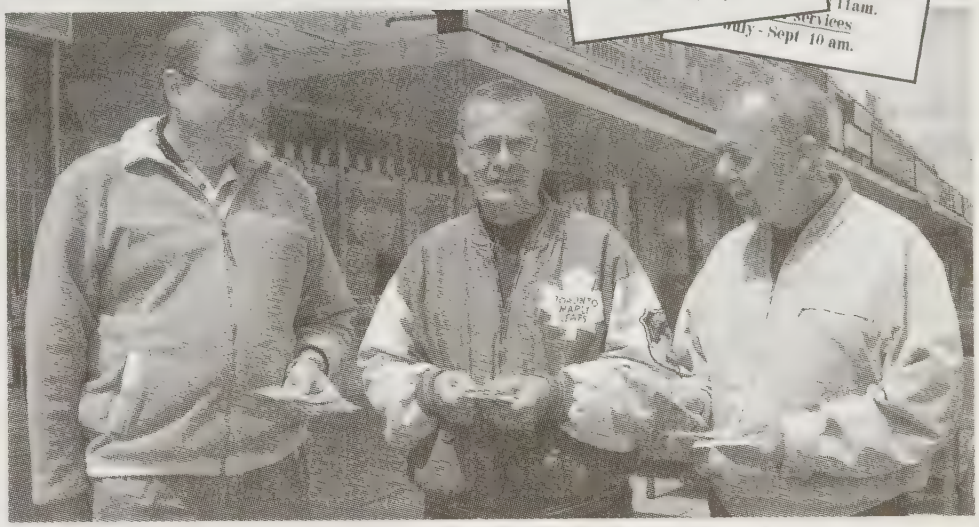
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Kindness packs a punch

Two projects encourage random acts of kindness

BY L. JUNE STEVENSON





Volunteers gather to give out seed packets in May. Left to right: Dennis Cook, minister, Tom Aitkenhead and Terry Nicholls, volunteers.

If you go down to the mall today, you're in for a big surprise. If the mall is somewhere in Ajax, Ont., and if it's 1 p.m. on the first Saturday of the month, someone may just hand you a Tim Hortons gift certificate and say, "Have a coffee on us."

You will be the recipient of a practical act of Christian kindness, or PACK. And the giver of the surprise gift will be a member of St. Timothy's, Ajax.. Some people are so startled to be offered a gift that they shake their heads and hurry on. Others ask what it costs.

The gift suits the time of year. In December, a package of Christmas wrap, gift card and ribbon starts you on your Christmas wrapping. On a cold Saturday in January, Tim Hortons gift certificates are certainly appreciated by the shivering people as they hurry by. Before Easter, a bag of candy Easter eggs brings a smile to any face. In May, a packet of seeds inspires most gardeners to get planting. Other planned acts might include a free car wash or an umbrella escort to shoppers on a rainy day.

St. Timothy's minister Rev. Dennis Cook came across the idea while surfing the Internet. Originally funded with a $500 gift, the PACK program was approved for $1,000 by session this year from the outreach budget.

Church members are also encouraged by this program to perform their own random acts of kindness: shovelling a neighbour's walk, raking someone's leaves, paying for the person behind you in a drive-through line, and especially being aware of ways to show an unexpected kindness, just because… Kindness is offered with no concern about having the favour returned.

PACK is an idea that has taken off in North America, based on Acts 1:8 which reminds us that "when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in Judea, and in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." It is a low-cost activity that requires little planning and enables your church to have a non-threatening interaction with your community. One U.S. ministry describes it as "sewing seeds made easy."

In Green Bay, Wis., motorists were surprised when members of Pilgrim Lutheran Church approached them at a gas station and offered to "buy down" their purchase that day so that the gasoline would cost only 99 cents a gallon. Jaws dropped in Chambersburg, Pa., when volunteers from the Church of God's Lighthouse Ministry Center went into a self-service laundry and offered to feed quarters into washing machines as patrons were standing with armloads of clothes. Members of St. James Lutheran, Shawano, Wis., gave away 150 hot dogs .

Owen Thornton, a Presbyterian elder from Westmount, London, Ont., is using all his business and technological skills to promote kindness. Owen launched Owen Thornton Communications to help remind people to be kind to one another wherever they are and whenever they can, including in the workplace. "The world, like lobsters in a trap, will attempt to draw you back down to its level," Owen says.

Surf his inspiring and inviting website, thehumankindnessproject.com, and you'll be amazed at what one man can do. Owen attributes his insight and knowledge to other writers from Dr. Seuss to Dr. Wayne Dyer, and uses many quotes, including some of his own, to encourage people to feel good about themselves and to pass that feeling on to others.

"True leadership comes from an attitude of servanthood," Owen says, using a Christian principle to promote good business practices. This energetic project, which has attracted interest from *The Globe and Mail* and *The London Free Press*, will inspire you to practice random acts of human kindness. Get involved!

L. June Stevenson is an elder at St. Timothy's, Ajax and a freelance writer.

A sense of the future

The Presbytery of Niagara seeks to go into the world at large

BY JENNIFER HIGGS



Church school kids play with Kraft Dinner boxes that were collected for a food bank project by St. Giles', St. Catharines.

The Presbytery of Niagara was host to the national church twice this year, bringing hundreds of volunteers together. Brock University in St. Catharines was the site of the 132nd General Assembly in June and Canada Youth 2006 in July. The presbytery has 19 charges and 23 congregations, some with a handful of adherents and others with more than 400 members. But each shares the goal of congregational renewal and re-visioning. Many churches are looking to expand their outreach. Rev. Tijs Theijsmeijer, presbytery clerk, says a future project with Arabic ministries is under consideration. "Hopefully within the next year it'll be an established ministry," he says.

Located in southern Ontario between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario, the presbytery of villages, small towns and cities borders the American border. Tourists from across the world visit the Niagara region for its wines, fruits and entertainment. Surrounded by vibrant attractions, the presbytery is compact in size, taking only about an hour to drive across.

A presbytery evangelism team is available to give churches fresh ideas and advice. The presbytery is working on the *Called to Covenant* visitation plan to improve congregational visits.

This fall Knox, Welland, started daily prayer meetings. The church's mission statement and goal for the past five years has been "HOPE: Houses of Prayer for Everyone, Everywhere and Everyday." Rev. Bernard McGale says he is trying to reintroduce the congregation to its Celtic roots. "That prepares us to go out and evangelize."

St. Andrew's, Welland, is a downtown church averaging 100 people in attendance on Sunday mornings. "We're growing, we're moving in the right direction," says Rev. Guy Sinclair. The music program is under construction, with a blend of traditional and contemporary music played at services. The congregation is updating its youth programs with a new youth group and Sunday school curriculum.

Rev. Maria Lallouet has a two-point charge at the Hungarian and Crowland churches in Welland. "It's such a joy every time and such a challenge to service such a diverse and totally different congregation," she says. The Hungarian church has two services on Sunday mornings, one in English and one in Hungarian. The church is implementing a three-year plan for church growth and renewal. Crowland, which celebrates its 180th anniversary this year, is small in numbers but large in faith, says Lallouet.

Rev. Katie Campion has a two-point charge at St. Andrew's, Beamsville and Smithville. The congregations are small but active as they look to reach the "un-churched" population. Beamsville will celebrate its 180th anniversary next May. The church in Smithville is proud of its working manual pump organ, recently declared a historic instrument by the Royal Canadian College of Organists.

The mission team at Knox, Dunnville, has made three trips to Latin American in the past five years, focusing on its twin church in El Salvador. Closer to home, Knox runs a monthly community kitchen where participants help plan and make four meals to take home. Along with four other local groups, the church envisions a joint community project for people in need. Last year, Knox worked on spiritual discovery, using resources from the national church.

In Fort Erie, St. Andrew's-Knox is a small congregation focusing on ministry and mission. The church is part of an ecumenical group running a Saturday Lunch Program in the community. This fall, Rev. Cameron Bigelow says his church will use a resource on stewardship and put effort and energy into looking at its objectives. "We're getting people to do what we don't do often—looking at ourselves in terms of the gospel and the gospel mandate," he says.

Chippawa in southern Niagara Falls is celebrating its 175th anniversary this year. Rev. Doug Schonberg says the majority of adults in the church attend some sort of spiritual learning group. The church pioneered a free online Bible study called *The Discipleship Project*, reaching people all over the conti-

nent. An online study guide and workshop provider, the three-year-old project is currently the church's "biggest claim to fame," says Schonberg. With just under 200 members, Chippawa is active in mission projects, sending 30 people to Nicaragua and collecting items for the local food bank. The church is working on a strategic plan to expand its local and global reach.

Sitting on the highest point in the Niagara Falls region, Drummond Hill has a long church history. "We're in a big study mode at the moment," says Rev. Wally Hong, Drummond Hill's minister since July 2006. With more than 200 members, the older congregation hopes to start a youth group in the next couple of years and is evaluating its agenda.

Stamford is the first church built in Upper Canada by public subscription in 1784 and now is in the historical northern Niagara Falls suburbs. Rev. Pieter Greyling says youth are the focus right now. A successful program called LOGOS—a ministry for adults, youth and children used in different North American congregations—runs for about 16 weeks at a time. Once-a-week meetings feature crafts, games, Bible stories and dinner.

The challenge is to reach out to the neighbourhood and new people moving into the area. "We need to gear our ministry to them," Greyling says.

St. Andrew's, Niagara-on-the-Lake, was established in 1794 and destroyed in the War of 1812. Rev. Gordon Ford says changes in the past few years include an increase in attendance at the church, which now has more than 250 members. The dedication of a new pipe organ occurred in the fall. The church's main fundraising event is an annual strawberry festival that draws thousands of people.

First, Port Colborne has an active congregation in the presbytery's southern town. The congregation averages 85 on Sundays and has the challenge of meeting in an oversized building, says Rev. Jack Neil. The congregation consists mainly of seniors, and is looking to attract younger people and develop the church school.

Neil is also the interim moderator for the Kirk-on-the-Hill congregation in Fonthill, a town about 25 minutes north of Port Colborne. He says next year the congregation will be seeking a new minister, and in the meantime they have pulpit supply each week. Neil says the group is active. "A very good feeling is coming back among the congregation."

Rev. Mary Whitson has a two-point charge at North Pelham, First and Rockway. St. Andrew's, Thorold, has several active groups, and offers the Alpha program. St. Andrew's, St. Catharines, is a small congregation that has recently started sharing its church building with a Spanish-speaking Protestant community. "That's been a growing experience," says Rev. Linda Robinson. In the southeast corner of the city, St. Andrew's has an average of about 30 people attending Sunday services. "I think the greatest change has been a sense of future, the sense that you know we're small but things are happening," says Robinson.

Scottlea, St. Catharines, is just over 40 years old. Rev. Martin Wehrmann says the church is in a building phase designed to assist accessibility and fellowship. A mix of Presbyterians from across Canada and other parts of the world enriches the congregation.

Mission work is a focus at St. Giles, St. Catharines. The church rotates four-month mission projects, such as supporting a room for Hospice Niagara. The large congregation has a contemporary and traditional service, with interesting summer series topics like "Canadian Idols." A labyrinth and outdoor meditation garden are well visited and cared for by the congregation.

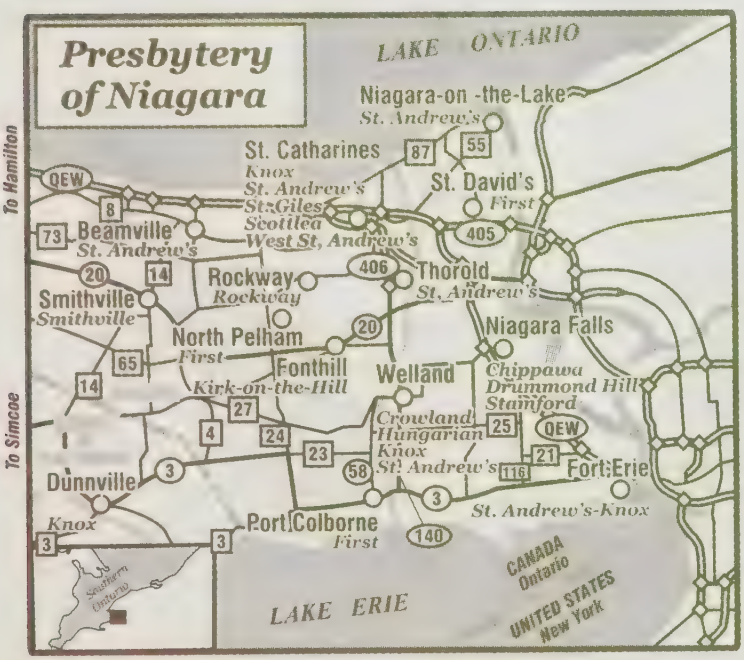
St. David's First is a small congregation with fewer than 15 people at an average Sunday service, but it is growing and looking towards a new vision. The church is now in use by the Village Bible Church, giving it "a new lease on life," says Rev. Paul Shobridge.

Shobridge has a two-point charge with West St. Andrew's, St. Catharines. He says the congregation is also seeking a vision and is looking to appeal to the nearby youth at Brock University.

Inspired by Matthew 28, Knox, St. Catharines, seeks to go into the world and create disciples. The downtown church takes part in an Out of the Cold program with other churches in the community to provide a place where homeless people can stay overnight in the cold months. The congregation supports a local drop-in centre for youth and Hospice Niagara. Its mission projects in India include digging a well in a small community and helping to immunize children.

Knox's youth group has joined with three other downtown congregations and will focus on discipleship and everyday faith this year. "We are a net exporter of youth," says Rev. Graham Kennedy. "So the challenge is to build up the church for young people."

Like many in the presbytery, Kennedy says his congregation helped to raise funds for the General Assembly, "The people did it gladly. They're quite proud of our national church." The presbytery works well together, "and in other ways, we're quite independent," he says—a "community of communities."



Map by HJ McClemens

Jennifer Higgs is a freelance writer.

To report a vacancy for the next issue of the Record please contact: Deborah Leader
Tel: 1-800-619-7301 x308 Fax: 416.441.2825 E-mail: dleader@presbyterian.ca
All notices of pulpit vacancies will be charged to the congregation: $8 a line, $40 minimum for a one-time insertion or $25 per insertion for four or more insertions.

Ministry Opportunities and Interim Moderators

New Church Development positions available through Canada Ministries; Contact Rev. Gordon Haynes, Associate Secretary; 416-441-1111 extension 258 for more details.

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Sackville, N.B., St. Andrew's; Interim Moderator Dr. Charles H. H. Scobie, 227 Main St., Sackville, NB E4L 3A7; 506-536-0247; cscobie@eastlink.ca.

St. John's, Nfld.; St. David's; Interim Moderator David Sutherland, 98 Elizabeth Ave., St. John's, NL A1B 1R8; dsutherland@nf.sympatico.ca.

Sunny Corner Pastoral Charge, N.B., St. Stephen's, Sunny Corner, St. Paul's, Warwick; Rev. H. Martyn Van Essen, 7 Hierlihy Rd., Tabusintac, NB E9H 1Y5; 506-779-1812; hmvanessen@hotmail.com.

Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario

Brockville, Ont., First Presbyterian Church; Rev. Geoff Howard, Interim Moderator, 38 Elizabeth Dr., P.O. Box 440, Iroquois, ON K0E 1K0; 613-652-6215; gl.howard@sympatico.ca.

Howick, Que., Georgetown; 1/2 time; Rev. Dr. Barry Mack, 496 Birch Ave., Saint-Lambert, QC J4P 2M8; 450-671-1862; standrews@standrews-stlambert.ca.

Inverness, Que., St. Andrew's co-operative with the United Church; Rev. J. B. Forsyth, 585 rue Principale sud, Waterville, QC J0B 3H0; 819-837-1475.

Montreal, Que., Taiwanese Robert Campbell Memorial; Rev. Dr. Bill Klempa, 155 Lac Louisa Rd. N., Wentworth, QC J8H 3W8; 450-533-5321; wklemp@po-box.mcgill.ca.

Montreal, Que., Westminster Presbyterian Church, Pierrefonds; Dr. J. Vissers, 3495 University St., Montreal, QC H3A 2A8; 514-288-5256 extension 201; jvissers@presbyteriancollege.ca.

Pincourt, Que., Ile Perrot; Mark Farrell, Convener, Search Committee, 242 Fifth Ave., Pincourt, QC J7V 5L3; 514-453-4796; markim@ca.inter.net.

Richmond, Ont., St. Andrew's; a call to dynamic, innovative, caring, family-focused ministry; Rev. Dr. Tom Gemmell, 38 Mary Hill Cres., Richmond, ON K0A 2Z0; 613-838-5949; tomgemmell@sympatico.ca.

Vankleek Hill, Ont., Knox, Hawkesbury, Ont., St. Paul's; Rev. Ian MacMillan, RR 2, Cornwall, ON K6H 5R6; 613-931-2545; a3100@glen-net.ca.

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Beeton, Ont., St. Andrew's; Rev. Jeremy Lowther, Caven Presbyterian Church, 110 King St. West, Bolton, ON L7E 1A2; 905-857-2419; rev.jeremy@rogers.com.

Belleville, Ont., St. Columba; Rev. Katherine McCloskey, PO Box 118, Stirling, ON K0K 3E0; 613-395-5006; katherinejonah@hotmail.com.

Cannington, Creswell, Wick, Ont., Open Door Cluster; Rev. D. A. (Sandy) Beaton, 32 Pine Point Lane, Port Perry, ON L9L 1B4; 905-985-4746; sandy.beaton@sympatico.ca.

Dunedin, Ont., Knox; Half-time position; Rev. Robert Graham, Interim Moderator; 160 King St. South, Alliston, ON L9R 1B9; 705-435-5081; robert.graham1@sympatico.ca.

Englehart, St. Paul's; Tomstown, Ont., Tomstown; St. Paul's and Tomstown Pastoral Charge approximately 10 km. from Tomstown; full-time minister; Interim Moderator Rev. Jean MacAulay, 307-310 Pine St. N., Timmins, ON P4N 6L3; jmacaulay@ntl.sympatico.ca.

Fenelon Falls, St. Andrew's and Glenarm, Ont., Knox; Interim Moderator The Rev. J. Desmond Howard, 290 Dutch Line Rd., Kinmount, ON K0M 2A0; 705-488-2187; desmondhoward@sympatico.ca.

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Mississauga, Ont., Dixie Presbyterian Church; Interim Moderator Rev. Kristine O'Brien, 354 Upper Middle Rd. E., Oakville, ON L6H 7H4; 905-842-2800; minister@trafalgarchurch.ca.

Mississauga, Ont., St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church; Interim Moderator Rev. Peter Barrow, 24 Stavebank Rd. N., Mississauga, ON L5G 2T5; 905-278-8907; standrewspc@bellnet.ca.

Oshawa, Ont., Knox; Rev. Ralph Fluit, 70 Old Kingston Rd., Scarborough, ON M1E 3J5; 416-283-3703; melville_church@bellnet.ca.

Oshawa, Ont., St. Luke's; Rev. Dennis Cook, 97 Burcher Rd., Ajax, ON L1S 2R3; dencook@rogers.com.

Penetanguishene, Ont., First; Rev. Peter Ruddell, Box A-180, R.R 1, Coldwater, ON L0K 1E0; 705-686-3125; panddruddell@rogers.com.

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Toronto, Ont., Bridlewood; Rev. Graeme Illman, 765 Myrtle Rd. W., Ashburn, ON L0B 1A0; 905-655-8509; InterimModerator@bridlewoodpc.ca.

Toronto, Guildwood Community; Rev. J. P. Ian Morrison, 17 Earswick Dr., Scarborough, ON M1E 1C7; 416-265-0135; Ian.morrison@sympatico.ca.

Toronto, Knox Agincourt; Interim Moderator Rev. Dr. Ian Clark, c/o Knox Agincourt Presbyterian Church, 4156 Sheppard Ave. E., Toronto, ON M1S 1T3; knoxpres@on.aibn.com.

Continued on page 48

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CREATED BY ERIN WALTON

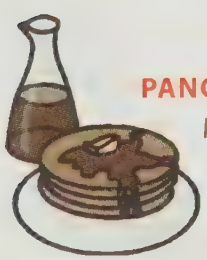


Are you starting to see some signs that the seasons are changing? The trees are losing their leaves, the days are getting shorter... Fall is turning into winter right before our eyes on the calendar. Are you ready for winter?

The church uses a different calendar; it's called a liturgical or a Christian calendar. It has more than just four seasons and the first season in the church calendar is right around the corner. Are you ready?

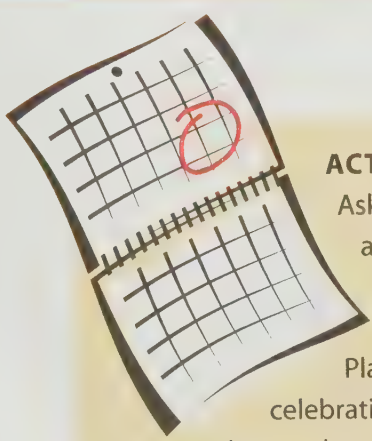
SEASONS OF THE LITURGICAL CALENDAR

SEASON	WHEN IT STARTS	WHEN IT ENDS	THEME
Advent	4 Sundays before Christmas	Christmas Eve	Anticipating the birth of the Messiah
Christmas	December 25	Twelve days later (Jan 6)	Celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ
Epiphany	Jan 6	The day before Lent	Jesus reveals Himself as God
Lent	Ash Wednesday	The day before Easter	A time of renewal with Jesus
Easter	Easter Day	Pentecost	Celebrating the resurrection of Christ
Pentecost	50th day after Easter (Pentecost means 50th day)	The day before Advent	Celebrating the gift of the Holy Spirit



PANCAKE SUPPERS

Many Christians over the years have developed traditions to help mark the change in the Christian season. For example, some have Pancake Suppers on the Tuesday right before Ash Wednesday (also called Shrove Tuesday) to prepare themselves for the Lenten season which traditionally involves fasting (going without meat!).



ACTIVITY

Ask an adult to help you mark all of the Christian seasons on your calendar; when they start and when they end. Plan a special activity or celebration for you and your family to do together to mark each change in season. If you come up with a really good idea; invite people from your church to do it with you!

Toronto, St. Andrew's; Rev. Bill Middleton, 105 Wilson Ave., Toronto, ON M5M 2Z9; 416-485-4000; bmiddleton@armourheights.org.
Toronto, St. Andrew's, Humber Heights; Rev. Garth Wilson, 155 Wychwood Ave., Toronto, ON M6C 2T1.
Trenton, Ont., St. Andrew's; Rev. Job van Hartingsveldt, 244 McMahon Ave., Kingston, ON K7M 3H2; 613-542-5579; strapark@kos.net.
Uxbridge, Ont., St. Andrew's-Chalmers; Rev. Duncan Cameron; 115 St. Andrews Rd, Scarborough, ON M1P 4N2; 416-438-4370; scarboroughpc@allstream.net.
Warkworth, Ont., St. Andrew's; Hastings, St. Andrew's; Rev. Blaine Dunnett, P.O. Box 787, Campbellford, ON K0L 1L0; 705-653-2036.
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West Toronto Presbytery, Albion Gardens; 2/3- time minister; Rev. Bob Sim; 416-812-8754; revbob@mimicochurch.ca.
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Synod of Southwestern Ontario

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Burlington, Knox Presbyterian Church; Interim Moderator Rev. Fred Stewart, 518 Carluke Rd. W., RR 2, Ancaster, ON L9G 3L1; 905-516-3534; fred@pastor.com.
Chesley, Geneva Church; Rev. Dr. Alex McCombie, R.R. 3, Chesley, ON N0G 1L0; Phone: 519-363-5392; Fax: 519-363-0975.
Dundalk, Erskine and Swinton Park, St. Andrew's; Interim Moderator, Rev. Jim Johnson, P.O. Box 256, Durham, ON N0G 1R0; 519-369-2181; d.p.c@sympatico.ca.
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Goderich, Knox Presbyterian Church; The Rev. Peter Bush, P.O. Box 235, Mitchell, ON N0K 1N0; knoxmit@quadro.net.
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London, New St. James'; Interim Moderator, The Rev. Keith McKee, 1475 Dundas St., London, ON N5W 3B8; stgeorge@execulink.com.
Molesworth, St. Andrew's; Part-time position; John Zondag, 220 Livingstone Ave. N., Listowel, ON N4W 1P9; 519-291-4690; jzondag@bellnet.ca.
Paris, Paris; Rev. John Cruickshank, 85 Mann Ave., Simcoe, ON N3Y 5K4; 519-428-3156.
Port Elgin, Tolmie and Burgoyne, Knox; Rev. Bill Vanderstelt, P.O. Box 280, Chatsworth, ON N0H 1G0; 519-794-0155; bvanderstelt@hotmail.com.
Sarnia, St. Giles; Interim Moderator Rev. Dr. Christine O'Reilly, 7745 Alfred St., Port Franks, ON N0M 2L0; 519-243-3862; corly@execulink.com.
Simcoe, St. Paul's; Rev. Dr. Stan Cox, Interim Moderator c/o St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, 85 Lot St., Simcoe, ON N3Y 1S4; 519-426-1845; stpc@kwic.com; www.stpaulssimcoe.com.
Thornbury, St. Paul's; Rev. Scott Sinclair, 865 2nd Ave. W., Owen Sound, ON N4K 4M6; scott_staos@on.aibn.com.

Synod of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario

Winnipeg, St. James; Rev. Amy Campbell, 299 Olive St., Winnipeg, MB R3J 2X5; 204-831-5561; amethyst@mts.net.
Winnipeg, Westwood; Rev. Matthew Brough, Knox, 341 Eveline St., Selkirk, MB R1A 1M9; mcbroug@shaw.ca or Rev. Kevin Macdonald, St. John's, 251 Bannerman Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2W 0T8; mactamal@yahoo.co.uk.

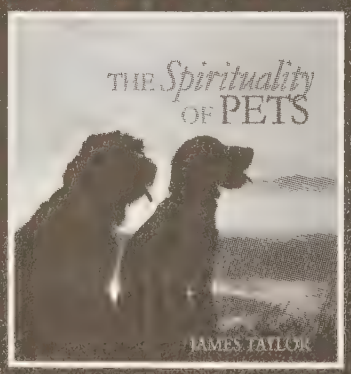
Synod of Saskatchewan

Saskatoon, Circle West; Parkview; Rev. Annabelle Wallace, 436 Spadina Cres. E, Saskatoon, SK S7K 3G6; 306-242-0525; standrews@sasktel.net.
Weyburn, Knox; Interim Moderator Rev. Willem van de Wall; 306-782-1518; vandewall@sasktel.net.

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Comox, Comox Valley; Interim Moderator Rev. Elizabeth Forrester, 2408 Glenayr Dr., Nanaimo, BC V9S 3R7; 250-751-1544; eamfor@telus.net.
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Vancouver, Chinese Presbyterian Church, Associate Minister (English Ministry); Interim Moderator, Rev. Diane Tait-Katerberg, c/o Chinese Presbyterian Church, 6137 Cambie St., Vancouver, BC V5Z 3B2; katerberg@dccnet.com.
Victoria, Chinese (bi-lingual, English/Cantonese); Rev. H. McNabb, 760 Latoria Rd., Victoria, BC V9C 3A4; hamcnabb@shaw.ca.
West Vancouver, West Vancouver Presbyterian Church; The Rev. R. C. (Bob) Garvin, 12225 Senda Crt., Mission, BC V4S 1B8; garvins@shaw.ca.

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The deadline for receiving applications is
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30TH, 2006

Applications should be submitted to:

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Life and Mission Agency
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Our gifts relieved suffering

Lives continue in India thanks to Canadian Presbyterians

I am writing this from India. I am traveling with Ron Wallace of International Ministries, Sarah Kim of the Women's Missionary Society and Amy MacLachlan of *The Presbyterian Record*. As we visit projects, organizations and institutions, we have been warmly welcomed. We have met many friends of the PCC, both old and new. They have asked me to extend their warm greetings and deep appreciation to the members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

As we walked the sandy beach on the shores of the Bay of Bengal near Chennai, we experienced first hand the assistance that has been given to the victims of the tsunami that devastated and uprooted families in the villages along the coast. In the village we visited, all the homes were damaged and one life was lost. When the tsunami hit, the villagers saw what was happening and they quickly moved to safer ground. They told us of the five-foot wave that first hit the shore, then described the larger waves that came an hour later, and the 30-foot wall of water that completely devastated their small fishing village.

It was almost two years ago that this natural disaster happened. Many of the villagers have now moved into their new homes, mainly provided by the Government of India. Several families are still waiting in their makeshift huts. They have been promised their new homes within the next seven months. As we walked the beach with the fishermen we were hearing words of gratitude as they proudly showed us the three fishing boats provided by The Presbyterian Church in Canada through Presbyterian World Service and Development. On the day we visited, the waters were rough and threatening, and it was not difficult to imagine the horror of December 26th, 2004.

The tsunami is a memory that you and I, and especially those personally affected, will never forget. Presbyterians in Canada responded very generously to the church's emergency appeal. To see the results of your gifts made me very proud of what we were able to do to help relieve the suffering of the victims. They welcomed us with the customs of their culture, putting paint on our faces and draping flowers around our necks.

During our visit to Chennai we also experienced some of the work of our partners with the Institute for Development Education. We visited several self-help projects where women are enjoying the freedom of managing their own small businesses, children have tutors to help them in their studies and teens are taught typing and computer skills.

Our visit to the Bhil Field in India has been an overwhelming experience as we shared in the opening of the new Christian school in Jobat and took part in the celebrations held in Amkhut with the recently acquitted Bhil prisoners. I will be sharing more in the future.

Thank you for making a difference in the lives of people who look to us for help and support. We as Presbyterians in Canada have always been there to help when the need arises and I am confident we will continue this generosity.

M. Wilma Welsh



Pauline Brown, a missionary in India for 55 years, stands with the acquitted Bhil prisoners, in Amkhut.

MODERATOR'S ITINERARY

November

5	Morning Chinese, Vancouver; worship
5	Afternoon Taiwanese, Vancouver; worship
6 – 7	Life and Mission Agency Committee, Vancouver
7	St. Andrew's Hall, Vancouver
12 – 14	Women's Mission Society Executive Council Meeting, Toronto
18 – 19	Paterson Memorial, Sarnia, Ont.; 75th Anniversary
20 – 21	Assembly Council, Crieff Hills, Ont.
26	Chippawa, Niagara, Ont.; anniversary



Presbyterian Church representatives were in Jobat, India in September to dedicate the newly built Masihi Christian school. The project was made possible thanks to a generous donation from the late Mabel Booth, and was administered through the Women's Missionary Society. The PCC has supported the school, along with the Jobat hospital, community health program and nurse's college, for many years. Standing with Rt. Rev. L. Maida, Bishop of the Diocese of Bhopal, Church of North India, are l-r: Moderator Wilma Welsh, Rev. Dr. Ron Wallace, International Ministries and Rev. Sarah Kim, Women's Missionary Society.

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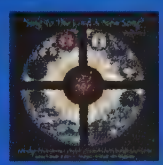
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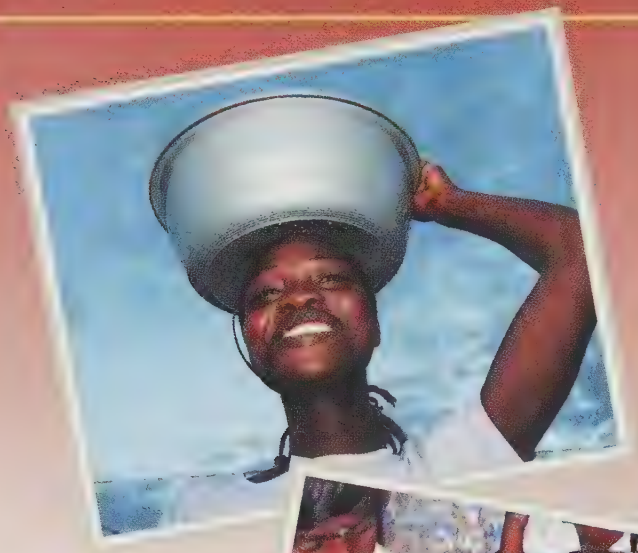




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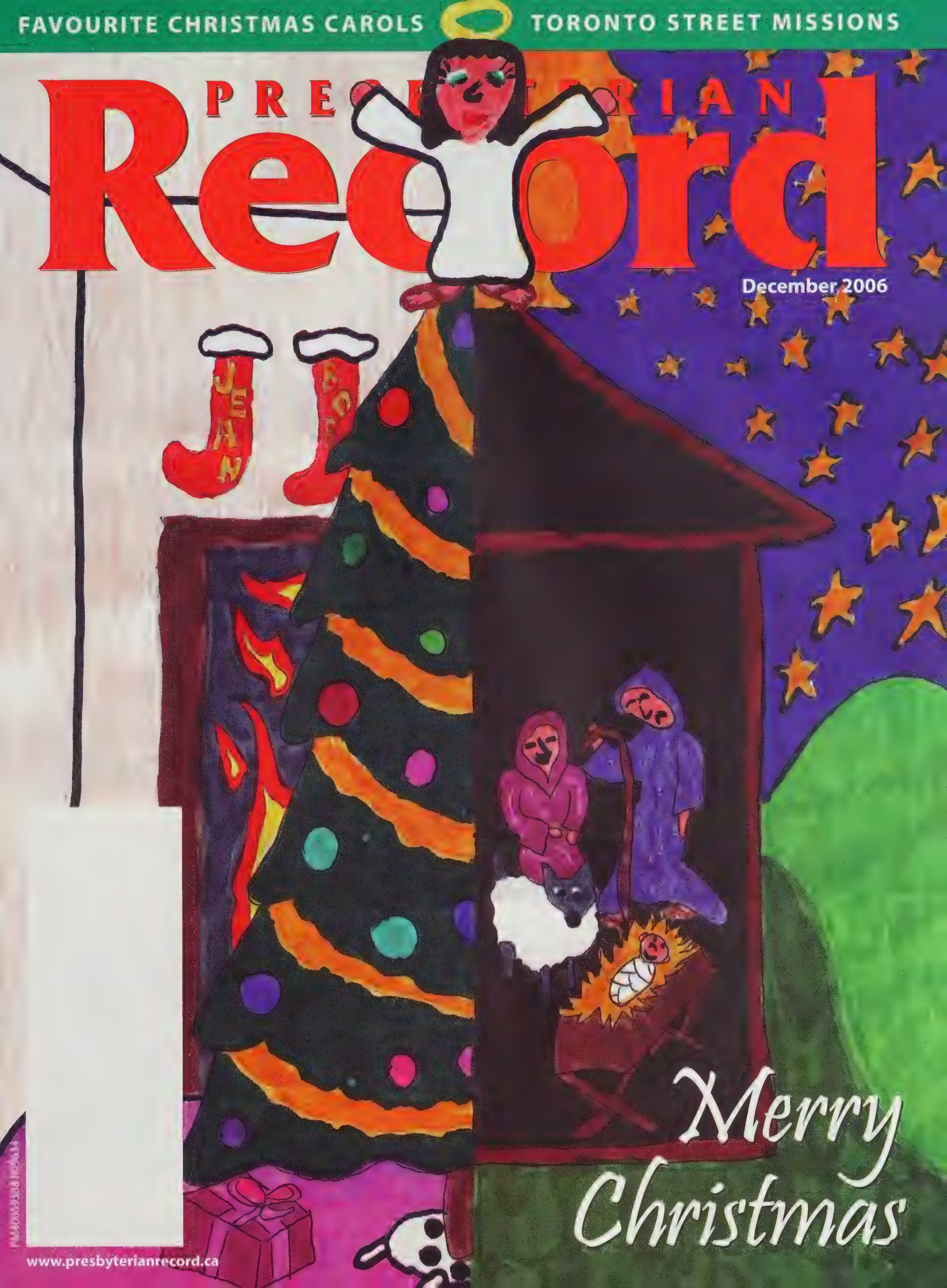
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Presbyterian Record

December 2006



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Yuletide Greetings

from the board
and staff of the
Presbyterian Record



Christopher Hughes (age 7), Milton, Ont.

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PRESBYTERIAN Record
DECEMBER 2006



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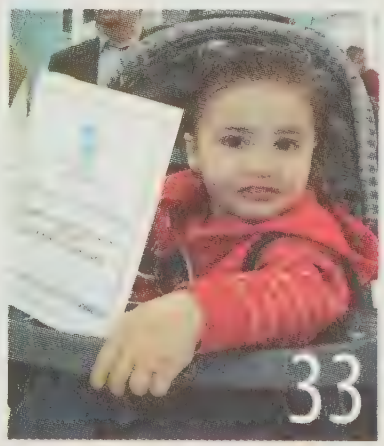
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A 130-year-old Record

In 1866, as the Fathers of Confederation were working on drafting the British North America Act that would lead to the creation of Canada the following year, a Montreal businessman and journalist, James Croil, was appointed an agent of the Presbyterian synod in connection with the Church of Scotland "to devise and carry into execution such measures as … seem expedient for aiding and advancing the schemes of the Church…."

In the ensuing 16 months, Croil would crisscross the country, gathering information that would eventually help lead to the formation in 1875 of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. After a time selling life insurance, Croil was appointed editor of the *Presbyterian*, the monthly magazine of The Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland.

When this synod united with the Canada Presbyterian Church, the Church of the Maritime Provinces in connection with the Church of Scotland, and the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces in 1875, Croil was appointed editor of the newly created *Presbyterian Record*—itself formed from the *Presbyterian* and the *Home and Foreign Record of the Canada Presbyterian Church*. The magazine was published monthly, except in August, although then it was "the official organ" of the church, as Croil notes in his eponymous autobiography.

One hundred-thirty years later and the *Record* is still published monthly, except in August. And although it is now an editorially independent publication, it still serves as the magazine of record for the life and witness of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Croil served as the magazine's editor from 1876 to 1891, retiring at age 70. The subsequent six editors were all Presbyterian clergymen, four of whom were elected moderator of the church.

Over the course of time, the magazine came to be governed by a standing committee of the General Assembly. Despite this formal relationship, successive assemblies and committees came to see the wisdom of protecting the editorial independence of the magazine, a position that recent assemblies have continued to respect, despite occasional requests to do otherwise.

In the late 1990s, mainly as a result of changes to the federal postal subsidy program, the committee sought to establish an independent non-profit corporation to publish the *Record*. In 1999, General Assembly placed this matter in the hands of Assembly Council, who ultimately agreed for the committee to dissolve and for Presbyterian Record Inc. to be formed.

The new corporation's relationship to the church was largely modeled after the Presbyterian Church Building Corporation. It is governed by nine directors, elected in a rotation to serve three-year terms, with the moderator of assembly retaining an ex-officio directorship. The directors are a governance board, responsible for developing the magazine's policy framework and making sure the operation is managed properly. This is particularly important, as the magazine draws no subsidy from the church. In 2006, the corporation was granted federal charitable status and issues its own tax receipts for donations.

Despite its corporate, editorial and financial independence, the links between the *Record*'s governing corporation and the church are many and varied. For instance, General Assembly approves (but may not impose) nominations for members of the corporation, and the board holds its formal "conversations" with the wider church through the medium of an annual report at the General Assembly. The magazine also pays rent to the national church in return for office space, financial and other infrastructure services, and the current board has maintained the tradition that the treasurer is the chief financial officer of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

During his stint as "agent" of the church, Croil says he travelled about 12,000 miles, visiting 126 congregations. Fortunately, the manager of the Grand Trunk Railway "furnished [me] with a free pass from station to station, over all its roads…".

While we don't get a free pass anymore on the railway, the staff of the *Record* still travel across the country and around the world to bring you news about the church in Canada and missionary and development work overseas, and the editor still visits congregations and presbyteries to preach and meet people.

The staff of the *Record* are all proud of the magazine's 130-year history and we hope it will continue to serve you, its readers, for many more years. From all of us here, we send you and your families our very best wishes for a Happy Christmas and holiday season.

David Harris

letters

Check the check list

Training Programs Rejected, September, outlined several materials that were deemed unacceptable by our national Christian Education Advisory Committee. I want to clarify that some of these resources are poor (in our estimation), but others are excellent. They just aren't a good fit. For instance, our committee looked recently at an excellent and affordable curriculum called *Gather Round*. Even though we liked it very much, one of the reasons we did not add it to our chart of recommended curricula was due to liberal references to Mennonite mission projects and we do not want to distract Presbyterians from our own mission endeavours with PWS&D and Presbyterians Sharing.

We use a check list when choosing curriculum and this is not a secret document. But, thanks to this *Record* article, it reminded us to circulate it to the church. You can find our curriculum check list in the November PCPak which goes to every congregation. This can help congregations evaluate materials for their own context.

Dorothy Henderson
Office of Christian Education
Toronto

A singularly fine man

Re Thank You, Padre, November.

It was nice to see a photo of Padre Robert Seaborn. Our paths crossed on at least two occasions: the first when, as dean of the Anglican Cathedral in Quebec City, he officiated at my marriage to Rosalind Wiggs of that city. Although then an Anglican, she is a great granddaughter of Dr. John Cook, The Presbyterian Church of Canada's first moderator, and we have since for many years been members of Glenview in Toronto. Ecumenism as a practical lifestyle!

Then in the late 1960's I wrote a history of the Prince Class ships of the wartime Canadian Navy, of which HMCS Prince Henry was a landing ship infantry on D-Day, with Padre Seaborn, as in your photo, giving comfort and spiritual encouragement to those troops about to assault the Normandy beaches. We corresponded several times about his role on that momentous day and his stories added to making that history come alive with real people, not just ships in the abstract.

He was a singularly fine man, was later a bishop in his church, and a very real pleasure to have known.

Fraser McKee
Toronto

Insightful and colourful

What a joy to see the photos in October: the cover, children, youth, men and women. Thanks for including Something Extra with its fine photos and choices of giving meaningfully. This issue seems to bind our Presbyterian family together. I found David Harris' editorial both insightful and forthright. The edition's arrival days before Thanksgiving weekend provided me additional reasons for thanksgiving.

Carolyn Boyer
Barrie, Ont.

America not an empire

I was really annoyed to read in October "the cancerous consumerist totalitarianism of the American Empire" in an article by Stuart Coles.

Our church is all about love and not hate! All developed countries are consumerist (because they have money to spend) and when we buy we help others to earn a living to support their families.

America is a democracy, unlike China, Cuba, North Korea, Belarus, most of Africa and other places. America does not have an empire, as did the old disgraced communist empire of the Soviet Union.

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The Rev. Emily K. Rodgers
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Wednesday, December 13th
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Wednesday, December 20th
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12:15 p.m. Meditation
12:45 p.m. Sandwiches

America does not beg aid from the entire world due to HIV/AIDS but contributes more money than anyone to fight AIDS in Africa. America has 13 million illegal immigrants, is multi-cultural, multiracial and has a much more faithful attendance record in its Christian churches than does Canada and all other "consumerist" countries.

Ralph Forshaw
Nanaimo, B.C.

Keep the promise

Re Our faith demands more of us, October

Thank you for a clear-eyed, compassionate overview of the very complex global HIV/AIDS crisis.

In ways that we have not seen before, we heard in this article the voices of our brothers, like Christo Greyling, and our sisters, like Andrena Ingram, who have suffered too much, for too long.

We must do all we can to end this horror: love, pray, give aid, and so obey our calling as followers of Christ.

Rev. Marion Schaffer

A sense of humour helps

Recalling 40 years as a military and a hospital chaplain: We love applause, the lift from the clapping of hands from a receptive audience. Once upon a time my parishioners presented me with a set of luggage. Were they trying to tell me something? Was this an ever-so-gentle hint that they had had it with my pastoral leadership? Do you recall this verse?

I do not love thee, Dr. Fell,
The reason why, I cannot tell,
But this alone I know full well,
I do not love thee, Dr. Fell.

Dr. Fell was a professor at Oxford University and these lines were probably written by one of his students. As kids, we were often told: "Names can never hurt me," but we know for certain that words can hurt. Many a student ditches his beliefs to be "one of the gang." In the early days of my ministry, I soon realized that it was disastrous to try to win a popularity contest. Christ told us that Christians would be lied about, reviled and persecuted. A newly-inducted young cleric complained about the lack of response and the continuous criticism. My advice was, "Wake up. There will always be a few who don't like you. Don't waste your time trying to placate them. Simply ignore them. You must make up your mind that you can't please everyone." In the words of Mark Twain: "Nothing needs reforming so much as other people's habits."

We like to be liked but prophets and reformers have always been unpopular. After many years of pastoral

'Wake up. There will always be a few who don't like you. Don't waste your time trying to placate them. Simply ignore them. You must make up your mind that you can't please everyone'

care, this retiree has learned that, "A sense of humour helps in the face of unjust criticism."

Rev. Evan H. Jones
London, Ont.

Corrections

In November we reported that the Ontario Presbyterian Chorus "raised $1,000 through ticket sales" for St. Andrew's, St. John's. In fact, St. Andrew's, St. John's, received a donation from the choir of $1,000, on top of the offerings collected, towards the renovations of the church. We regret this error.

A photo in People and Places in October incorrectly stated that a 145-year-old congregation was located in Argyle, Ont. In fact, Argyle is the name of the church, and it is located in Crinan, Ont. The church is part of a two-point charge with Duff, Largie.

The advertising deadline for the annual camp section in the February 2007 issue of the *Presbyterian Record* was incorrectly stated in last month's notice. It should read December 15, 2006.



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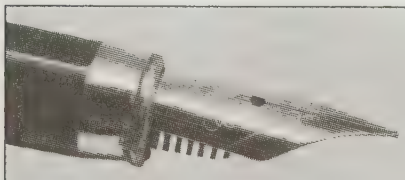
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March 2007 – by January 15, 2007

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At the heart of mission are local efforts based on education and faith, like this one: West River, Durham, Pictou County, Nova Scotia, collected offerings every day during their summer Vacation Bible School and raised $300 for Aberdeen Hospital, New Glasgow. This VBS has been running for 25 years, with some teachers and volunteers having participated in each one. This year's session had 30 students.



Here's Rev. Rick Fee accepting a cheque for $25,830 from Dianne Hildred, Kathy Sauve, Rev. Linda Ashfield and Kathryn Hare of Knox, Waterloo, Ont. Behind this joyful moment is a joy of a different sort: the hard work and great effort put in by all levels and members of the congregation to raise the funds for the Towards A World Without AIDS campaign. And fun too: Reuben St. Louis' CD launch, Bands against AIDS organized by the youth group, a fashion show, bake sales, cookbook sales, fundraising fasts and general appeal mailings. It takes a village to save a village.



Here's another mission effort by the Sunday school at First, Pictou, Nova Scotia, which raised $2,010.76 this past spring for their Christian School Fees mission project in India (The Helen MacDonald and Margaret Leask Memorial Schools). From front row, left: Klorissa Farnsworth, Arin MacDonald, Mullen Boulter, Riley Boulter, Madison Spurr, Liam Dwyer, Brenna Dwyer, Kristen MacRitchie, Clare MacDonald, Annie MacRitchie; Heidi and Tanner Spurr, Beverly Mingo and Cynthia Dwyer. The ladies wore Saris and served traditional foods assisted by a friend, Usha Sood.

For more People & Places submissions please visit our website: www.presbyterianrecord.ca



Contrary to popular belief there is nothing in the Book of Forms forbidding fun, which is precisely what this gang, from Glenelg, Nova Scotia, had in September. And while it is true that most of the kids holding up their index finger in this photograph are giving glory to God, at least one of them also wants the national church to know that the kids' team beat the adults' team in the soccer game. Ah yes, the family that plays together...

Ask any minister and they'll tell you pastoral visitations, though often blessings, are rarely easy. Pastoral visitations to strangers can be that much more difficult. So, it is with understanding we praise the lay members of the Presbytery of Ottawa who comprise the Pastoral Care Team, who for 20 years have been visiting out-of-towners in area hospitals. Rev. Dr. Floyd McPhee, centre, is seen with coordinator Marlene du Charme and members of the team at their anniversary celebration.





Don't these ministers look great 25 years after their diaconal ordination? The happy occasion was Rev. Susan Clarke's ordination and induction at St. Andrews, Kars, Ont., in September, when some of her former classmates joined her to celebrate. From left: Donna McIlveen, Clerk of the Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario, Rev. Susan Clarke, Terri-Lee Hamilton, Senior Administrator, General Assembly office, Hye Ok Lee, Ottawa, Rev. Ann Blane, Toronto, Christine Ball, Educational Consultant for Presbytery of Ottawa, Rev. William Ball, minister at Westminster, Ottawa. Missing from the picture but also present at the service was Dorothy Herbert, co-managing director, Gracefield Camp and Conference Centre.

HAD CAKE LATELY? Share your celebrations with the rest of the church. Send your stories to PnP@presbyterianrecord.ca along with your digital photographs, 300 dpi minimum, high quality JPEGs. Or mail the photographs to: The Record, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, M3C 1J7.

To be considered for People and Places, photographs should be sharp and everyone clearly identified. The *Record* reserves the right to reject any photos not of sufficient quality. Photographs cannot be returned.

Financial vision keeps growing

The Experimental Fund helps the church be more active

When George van Beek gave his first $5,000 grant to start the Experimental Fund back in 1981, he wasn't really sure what would become of it.

"At the time, the church was rather flat; nothing was really developing," he told the *Record*. "I wondered what we could do to make it more lively. I just wanted the church to reach out in a different way, and that was the way to do it. And it's still working well."

Van Beek was in Toronto in October to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Experimental Fund, which gives grants to congregations or groups looking for new and unique ways of doing mission and ministry.

That first $5,000 was given by van Beek to assist the church in its "doubling in a decade" initiative—which many hoped would have people clamouring to enter a Presbyterian parish by the time 1990 was rung in.

The goal, of course, fell short, but the fund that began to aid it continued and grew. Since its inception, the fund has given $150,000 to support new initiatives, with $500,000 currently in the bank.

Many projects that still exist today got their start thanks to the fund, including the Cariboo House Church Ministry in British Columbia, the church's web page, the Talking Record (making the *Presbyterian Record* available on audio tape), and a project developed by Lakeshore St. Andrew's, Tecumseh, Ont., that became the forerunner for the church's Leading with Care project.

"I'm delighted with the fund," said van Beek, who remains the fund's chief benefactor. "I just wanted the church to be more active; it didn't really concern me how they did it."

Although the fund received its first monetary gift in 1981, it wouldn't be until 1984 that it was fully endorsed by the General Assembly.

"The church was on the verge of change at that time," said Dr. Margaret Taylor, whom van Beek first spoke to about starting the fund. She also used to sit on the fund's executive. "And George wanted a place in the church to do something of an experimental nature. He and [wife] Evelyn had the vision. And some people couldn't quite grasp it."

She noted that van Beek was always sure of one thing: that the fund would support projects that benefited the whole church, and not just a small part of it.

Van Beek's vision has also provided for the fund's future, stipulating in his will that upon his death, the fund will be put under an agency of the church, rather than having volunteers manage it. The agency will report to General Assembly.

SPOTLIGHT



George van Beek, founder of the Experimental Fund, spoke at a celebration of the fund's 25th anniversary at church offices.

It is hoped that through this closer connection to the church, the fund will enjoy greater publicity and a better ability to follow the activity of projects it has supported.

Upon this change, it will be renamed The Avondbloem Fund, meaning "evening flower" in van Beek's native Dutch. Future plans for the fund include supporting college bursaries, emergency situations and special building needs.

"George is a man of a lot of talents, a lot of love and a lot of gifts," said Rev. Dr. Fred Rennie, secretary of the fund and van Beek's longtime friend and minister. "We're grateful for his foresight and benevolence in this project." – *AM*

For more information on the Experimental Fund, visit www.presbyterian.ca/exfund/index.html.

Female minister wins discrimination case

Presbytery filing for review

The former minister of a four-point charge in Prince Edward Island who claimed she was fired because she is a woman had her claim upheld by the P.E.I. Human Rights Commission when it ruled in her favour in August.

"The Panel does not find persuasive the Respondent's [presbytery's] suggestion that the animosity faced by Rev. Matheson, which ultimately resulted in her termination, was caused by her style of ministry," states the panel in its decision. "The Respondent did not take the appropriate steps to deal with the harassment. In addition, the Respondent placed the blame for the incidents and the deterioration of the pastoral relationship on Rev. Matheson. The Panel finds that Rev. Matheson was subjected to a difference of treatment on the basis of gender."

The presbytery, however, has filed a judicial review, arguing that it did not receive a fair trial. "We feel, as a presbytery, that a great portion of our testimony was ignored," said Rev. Paula Hamilton, clerk of the Presbytery of P.E.I. "It was disheartening."

Hamilton, who has served in the presbytery for eight years, said it will be months before a Supreme Court of P.E.I. judge reviews the hearing's transcripts, and decides if overturning the ruling or ordering a new trial is warranted.

The presbytery must also wait to find out what damages, if any, are to be paid to Matheson. The panel will meet again after hearing from the lawyers involved in the case. Matheson could not be reached for comment.

'We feel, as a presbytery, that a great portion of our testimony was ignored. It was disheartening'

Litigation began in 1996, when Matheson, who had served at the Murray Harbour North pastoral charge for 10 years, was fired. She complained of being harassed and stalked, said she was sent anonymous letters expressing opposition to female ministers, and accusing her of being in a lesbian relationship and of sexual abuse, was told to seek psychiatric counselling and that the presbytery failed to act when she made her complaints known—all because she is a woman. Her stalker, Elmer MacPherson, chairman of the manse committee, was tried and convicted in provincial court in 1991.

The presbytery argued that Matheson was not let go because of her gender, but because the pastoral tie was beyond repair after years of confrontation and strained relationships. It argued that her treatment of her parishioners was unacceptable, and that they no longer trusted her as a minister. The presbytery denies Matheson's allegations, stating (as summarized in the panel's report), that it had "at all times acted in good faith and made earnest efforts to support Rev. Matheson and that it was her conduct that alienated her from her congregations to the point where the pastoral tie was no longer workable or sustainable."

There are currently five female ministers serving charges in the presbytery, and both the presbytery clerk and moderator are women.

The General Assembly approved the ordination of women in 1966, but still allowed existing churches and clergy to exercise a "liberty of conscience" when making a call. The policy was revoked in 1990. – *AM*



Kim warmly welcomed

KENNETH KIM was officially installed as the new director of Presbyterian World Service and Development on Nov. 3 at a recognition service at church offices. His new position follows 11 years of service in Central America with International Ministries.

"We're ready to dive in with you," said Rev. Derek Macleod, who commissioned Kim to the charge, "to respond to the needs of the world, and to meet the One who called us to jump. So together, let's go."

Married with four children, Kim thanked his family for being with him during the transition. "I do not stand here alone," Kim said at the service. "When I heard the call, I didn't want to answer. When I was unsure, my wife encouraged me. Sometimes I'm still unsure, and she still encourages me. You all encourage me."

Kim's dedication to justice and human rights issues began as a child, when an aunt—who was unknown to him at the time—invited him and his family to move to Canada from Korea. "I am an immigrant," a teary-eyed Kim reminded his audience. "My aunt can't be with us today. She has cancer. So I dedicate this moment to her."

Kim has worked in a variety of capacities including human and labour rights, community and church development, youth ministry and mission education. Kim has been functioning as PWS&D director since Aug. 1, and succeeds Rev. Rick Fee, who became the general secretary of the Life and Mission Agency last year. – *AM*

Thousands missing in Ormstown

THE POLICE ARE investigating the disappearance of between $30,000 and $60,000 from the bank account of Ormstown Presbyterian Church in Ormstown, Que. According to member Rodger Muir, the money has been known to be missing for several years, but little has been done about it thanks to protection afforded the now-former treasurer by the now-former minister, two congregation elders and some members of the Montreal Presbytery.

"Somehow, some way, someone's got to stand up and tell the congregation that the money is missing and how it happened," said Muir. "People can be forgiven. Just say sorry and let's start the healing process."

The minister and treasurer were forced to resign in spring 2005, enabling the congregation to verify the books. By August 2005, it became evident that several thousand dollars were missing—with numerous cash deposits totaling $7,000 that were listed, but never actually made.

Tired of the lack of accountability and the poor stewardship demonstrated at his church, Muir made a report to the police in May 2006. After a trial investigation, police determined there is enough evidence to merit a thorough search, and a pending seizure of the church's bank records. According to Muir, it is not known where the money is or exactly how it went missing.

Presbytery conducted its own investigation before police stepped in. According to presbytery clerk, Dr. Michael Pettem, session made a request to presbytery to look into the situation. A committee was struck (which included two chartered accountants) and the bank records were examined. The committee confirmed that "something was going on," but once the police got involved, presbytery's investigation was ended.

Muir said, however, that the presbytery's investigation started pitting parishioners against each other, beginning a bitter split that continues today. "Things have gone from bad to worse ever since," said Muir. – *AM*

Tomato workers not loving McDonald's

After declaring victory last year on Taco Bell for the treatment of Florida tomato pickers who supply the food chain, the Alliance for Fair Food, in association with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, are now going after McDonald's, the biggest fast food chain in North America.

"It is our hope that as McDonald's sees the strong and growing support for fair food from its customers, that it will heed our call to address human rights abuses in the company's tomato supply chain," said Rev. Noelle Damico, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s associate for its Fair Food campaign. The Board of Pensions of PC(USA) and the Presbyterian Foundation are institutional shareholders in McDonald's Corporation, and the church is a founding member of the AFF.

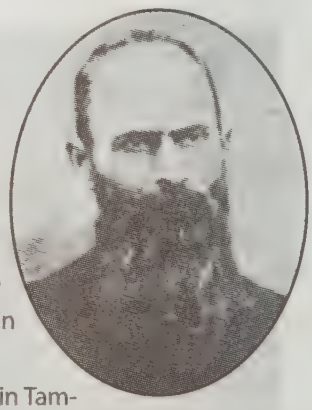
After a four-year boycott of Taco Bell, the chain's parent company, Yum! Brands, decided to work with the CIW and raise workers' wages, agreeing to pay a penny more per pound for its tomatoes and insuring the increase goes directly to the farm workers (effectively nearly doubling their wages). The March 2005 agreement also established the first code of conduct for Florida agricultural suppliers that guarantees a meaningful role for farm workers in the protection of their own rights.

Now, workers want the same arrangement with McDonald's, along with a chain in which it holds a controlling share, Chipotle Mexican Grill. Chipotle is already committed to "food with integrity," which ensures humane treatment for the animals used by the chain, along with an increasing use of organic ingredients. AFF is asking Chipotle to transfer this kind of thinking to the conditions its tomato pickers currently endure.

Farm workers picking for McDonald's suppliers currently earn 40-45 cents US for every 14.5-kilo bucket of tomatoes they harvest, a wage that has remained stagnant for more than 25 years. The U.S. Department of Labor estimates the average wage is $7,500 per annum. Taco Bell purchases 10 million pounds of Florida tomatoes each year. The new agreement will cost the chain an additional $100,000. McDonald's purchases one and a half per cent of Florida's tomato crop.

"If McDonald's continues to ignore the human rights abuses in its tomato supply chain and turns a deaf ear to its customers' insistence that the company work with the CIW, a boycott is certainly one possibility," Damico told the Record. "We move forward with eyes open, prepared to witness to God's intention for justice in our food system in peaceful, rigorous ways."–*AM with files from Presbyterian News Service, the Alliance for Fair Food and the Coalition of Immokalee Workers*

Black Bearded Barbarian on screen



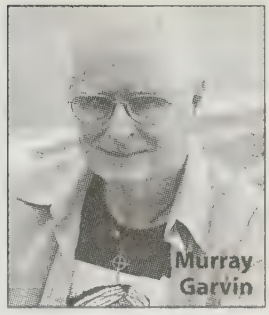
THE STORY OF Presbyterian missionary George Leslie Mackay came to the big screen in November, with a special launch screening at the University of Toronto. The documentary takes its title, *The Black Bearded Barbarian: Mackay of Taiwan*, from the name given to Mackay by the people he served. The documentary also aired on Omni, in available television markets.

Born in 1844, Mackay founded the first overseas mission in Tamsui, Taiwan in 1872. He combined dentistry with preaching the gospel and also trained local clergy. He worked in the region until his death in 1901, establishing chapels, schools and a hospital. He remains a beloved hero in Taiwan.

Presbyterian Michael Stainton, with the York Centre for Asian Research, will write an article about McKay in the *Record's* January issue.

Returning for the students

Missionary teaches English in land he loves


Murray Garvin

Asked why he teaches English in Taiwan as a volunteer, retired missionary Murray Garvin has a definite answer. "I enjoy the students more than anything else," he told the *Record* during a visit to church offices in June. "They're mostly third-generation Christians. They're very dedicated, and there's a fervour that you don't see very often in the Canadian church. Most are pretty motivated."

Garvin is speaking about the mostly Aboriginal students who attend the Yushan Theological College and Seminary in Taiwan. He taught English and theology there as a missionary of The Presbyterian Church in Canada for 15 years, beginning in 1961. He returned to Canada for his kids' education, but always regretted leaving the land he loved. "It's a beautiful place. The school is located in the mountains, on the shores of a lake."

Three years ago, Garvin went to Sarnia, Ont., to hear Yushan's choir perform. Memories of Taiwan immediately surfaced. "I thought, 'I've got to go back.'" One year later, after arranging a year-to-year appointment with International Ministries, Garvin returned to Taiwan, and now teaches English to college and seminary students.

Yushan was created as a school to serve the minority, meaning the 450,000 Aboriginals in a country of 23 million. About three-quarters of the Aboriginal population is Christian, while only three per cent of the general population is. At one time, about half of the church in Taiwan was Aboriginal, while today, the Taiwanese make up the majority.

Like the church in many countries, faith seems to be becoming less important in the lives of younger people, according to Fuyan, a second-year seminary student who accompanied Garvin in Canada for six weeks this summer.

Fuyan said the church is plagued by a lack of young members. The Aboriginal population is also becoming more integrated into mainstream society, where Christian influence isn't as strong and the family isn't as powerful. "People who move to the city from a village will not go to church once they get there, so they become lost," he said.

"Christian education does not run deep in their lives," he continued. "And there are not enough pastors to teach them. No leadership means they go to the city and forget."

"It leads to a sense of irrelevance," said Garvin of the way many young people perceive the church, "not a sense of importance."

Fuyan (his Aboriginal name) hopes to work in an Aboriginal church upon graduation. His Amis tribe is in desperate need of ministers. However, at only 24 years old, he also wants to continue his studies overseas.

Garvin admitted his attachment to his students, and the feelings of loss that accompany a graduation. However, he said watching those students move on to a new phase—and seeing new students begin their post-secondary careers—is exciting. "As long as my health is good and I'm needed, I'll stay as long as I can." *– AM*

THE CHURCH IN TAIWAN

- There are about 1,200 congregations in The Presbyterian Church in Taiwan. Presbyteries are generally arranged along tribal lines, although the larger tribes occupy several presbyteries in various geographical locations. The Amis tribe, where social organization is built primarily along matrilineal lines, is Taiwan's largest at about 130,000.
- The Yushan Seminary is partnered with two Taiwanese schools. The same standards and requirements hold true for all three, enabling students to transfer easily between them. Yushan currently enrolls 121 students—all Aboriginal except for about five Taiwanese (meaning ethnic Chinese). The school offers a four-year college program and a three-year seminary degree.
- Garvin said much has changed since he first travelled to Taiwan more than 40 years ago. He said there is a great deal less dependence on missionaries; noting there are none currently working with the Aboriginal church, save for English teachers. During his first stint, five missionaries taught theology, but the seminary has become self-reliant in this area.

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Presbyterian minister honoured for saving Jews

An 'emotionally moving moment'

The Jewish community recently honoured a Canadian Presbyterian minister who helped Jews and Christians escape Nazi persecution during the Second World War. Rev. Dr. Fred Metzger, now retired, was declared "righteous among the nations" at a Yad Vashem ceremony in Vancouver in May. Alan Baker, Israel's ambassador to Canada, flew in from Ottawa for the presentation.

"What a man. What inspiration. What principles. What dedication," said Garde B. Gardom, former lieutenant-governor of British Columbia, during the ceremony. "There's no question that what he believes in and practices can be a role model for anyone and everyone."

A native of Budapest, Hungary, Metzger was instrumental in saving Hungarian Jews from death and internment in concentration camps. His name was brought forward for the honour when Dr. Jan Gecsei, a computer sciences professor at the University of Montreal, told the story, in an interview, of a young pastor who had saved him and his mother (who died in August at age 94) from the Nazis. Gecsei was also at the ceremony and spoke of his wartime experiences.

"It was an emotionally moving moment for me," Metzger told the *Record*, "because he [Gecsei] reminded us that this celebration is a special gift from God, who gave 62 years of very rich and blessed time to him and his 94-year-old mother instead of ending at the crematorium of Auschwitz."

During the ceremony, Metzger recounted incidents from his life during the Nazi era for the 300 people in attendance. One of his saddest memories was the story of an 18-year-old youth named Bandi Rózsa. The son of wealthy Jewish merchants, Rózsa was preparing to be a medical doctor. One autumn day, his mother told Metzger that her son was on a long, slow death march to the railway station where he would be put on a train and taken to a concentration camp. Mrs. Rózsa had a Swedish passport for her son, which would release him from the march.

"I took the passport and got on a streetcar to Buda. By the time I arrived I was told they had just left," recounted Metzger. "The large group of Jews were already on the highway toward the north. I hurried after the slow-marching crowd on foot. They went like sheep to the slaughter. It was easy to spot Bandi, being so tall. He had a backpack and a suitcase in hand. 'Come Bandi!' I said. 'Step out! I have your Swedish passport. I can take you back to your parents!'

'No! I cannot come. My uncle is with me and he does not know the Lord!'

"I kept arguing with him. But seeing his determination, I had to give up. I returned with the passport to his mother … However, Bandi did not reach the railway station in the north.



Rev. Dr. Fred Metzger with Dr. Jan Gecsei, a Hungarian Jew whom Metzger saved from the Nazis during World War II.

We found out that he collapsed on the road. He had high fever and pneumonia and died near the railway.

"As the Scripture says: 'Greater love has no man than this; that a man lay down his life for his friends.' (John 15:13) I will never forget him."

Metzger became involved in the rescue operations after going to work in a chemical factory in Budapest as an industrial chaplain in 1943. It was then that Rev. József Éliás, director of the Good Shepherd Society (created by the Hungarian Reformed Church of which Metzger was a member) invited him to join the staff of his agency. The agency managed 32 properties along the Danube River to be used as safe houses for nearly 2,000 children and some of their mothers.

They also established an orphanage in Noszvaj and inspired Hungarian Christians to hide and rescue thousands of persecuted Jews. The institute included a large, complicated cave system in the basement, where adult army deserters were also able to hide.

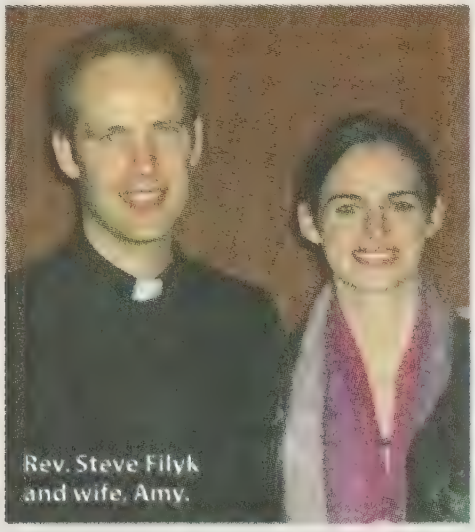
Mordecai Paldiel of the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem estimates that at least 100,000 non-Jews acted to rescue 595,000 Jews. An American researcher puts the number of rescuers at 250,000.

Metzger came to Canada in 1950 as a minister of the Reformed Church in Hungary and was soon appointed by the Presbyterian Church's Board of Missions to Edmonton, in order to start Calvin Hungarian Presbyterian Church. In 1953, the General Assembly received him as an ordained missionary and he was sent to Vancouver to begin another Hungarian congregation. In 1965, he moved to St. Columba, Vancouver, where he remained until his retirement in 1998.

He was also the institutional chaplain at the Central City Mission, Vancouver, the largest men's shelter in Canada at that time, between 1958 and 1964; founded the Westminster Foundation for clinical training of clergy in 1967, where both clergy and lay persons were trained in pastoral counselling; and was sent by the church to Vienna in 1956 during the Hungarian Uprising to bring more than 4,000 Protestant refugees and six Presbyterian ministers to Canada. In 1997, he received his Doctor of Divinity from the Presbyterian College, Montreal, and in

1984, he received the Pilgrim's Medal from Pope John Paul II.

Metzger is an avid collector of ancient artifacts, including a fragment of the Isaiah Scroll from the Dead Sea Scrolls. He is the founder of the Biblical Museum of Canada – Quest Exhibits, at Regent College, Vancouver. Due to lack of space, the museum will be moving to Trinity Western University. The teaching museum, which features exhibits valued at than $1 million from 37 distinct time periods, attempts to show how God has been trying to communicate with His creation throughout the ages. – *AM with files from Jim Mair.*



Rev. Steve Filyk and wife, Amy.

New minister inducted at A&P

MONTREAL'S LARGEST congregation received its new assistant minister, Rev. Steve Filyk, on a celebratory afternoon in October. The congregation of St. Andrew and St. Paul, along with presbytery members and ministers from around the city gathered at the historic church for the service of ordination.

Though St. Andrew and St. Paul has had assistant ministers for most of its recent history, Dr. Richard Topping had been serving the growing congregation without such support since 2003. After a search committee was struck in January to find the church's 28th assistant minister, Filyk was unanimously called by the congregation. He had already been involved with the congregation's youth.

Filyk is married to Amy, who is involved in several A&P ministries, including the church school. --*Joel Coppieters*



Transforming barren land into productive gardens is helping improve long-term food security in Nicaragua.

I was hungry

GUY SMAGGHE, PWS&D

Living on under $1 dollar a day, Isolda Obando, a 31 year old mother of two, living in Pacora, Nicaragua struggled to have enough to feed her family. Then Isolda was elected by the Pacora community development committee to become their community farming and ranching promoter. With support from PWS&D, The Council of Protestant Churches of Nicaragua, trained Isolda in practical skills that helped her grow food on plots of land which are "half a manzana" (0.38 hectare) or less in size. With those skills she transformed a small, desolate patch of land – that was being used as a garbage dump – into a lush garden growing corn, squash, cucumber, pineapple, peppers, tomatoes, lemons, bananas and many different herbs. "When I look at my plot it seems to be a lie to see all those crops, a green patch in the midst of dryness all around," she says. Isolda is now training others like her to do the same.

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Peace Nobel for 'banker'

ENI–The 2006 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Bangladeshi economist Muhammad Yunus and his Grameen Bank for pioneering small loans to poor people to set up in business, which has been hailed as a major boost for what is now called microfinance.

"Muhammad Yunus gave a new perspective for life to the 1.1 billion people that live on less than a dollar a day," said Tor G. Gull, managing director of Oikocredit, an international church-supported microfinance institution based in The Netherlands. "Some 450 million of them have already been reached with small loans that help to build up their own sources of income and many more are yet to come."

Sixty-six-year-old Yunus has been nicknamed a Banker to the Poor for setting up his Grameen Bank in 1976. This gave small loans known as microcredit to the very poorest in Bangladesh, particularly women, enabling them to start up small businesses.

Since then, the bank has been a source of ideas and models for the many institutions in the field of microcredit that have sprung up around the world, the Norwegian Nobel Committee noted in its citation.

China can solve problems

ENI–China is developing as a global leader with potential to help solve the world's problems, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, said in Nanjing during his first visit to the People's Republic.

"China is emerging as a senior partner in the fellowship of nations; a country whose economy is changing so fast and whose profile in the world has become so recognizable and distinctive that we can't imagine a global future without the Chinese presence," Williams told a reception for Chinese scholars who had studied in Britain.

"It's a presence which can do great good; it's a presence which has the capacity to push forward agendas, for instance about development and particularly about sustainable development," said Williams. "Yours is a society which will have messages to give to the rest of the world, but I hope too that it's a society willing to receive and to hear what the rest of the world has to say."

Templeton prize winner

ENI–Many church leaders do not understand what journalism is all about, while secular media are often suspicious of religion, says Portuguese journalist Antonio Marujo, this year's winner of the John Templeton Prize for the European Religion Writer.

"In the eyes of many church leaders, the media are just a modern form of pulpit. This is one of the biggest misunderstandings," said Marujo, religion writer with a daily newspaper, delivering the annual lecture that goes with the prize.

"As a professional journalist I have to write on religious institutions, of course. But I find it equally important to give exposure to unknown voices, to give voice to humble but significant faith experiences. Because the religious dimension is a fundamental part of the human being, still today."

The prize, administered by the Conference of European Churches on behalf of the U. S.-based John Templeton Foundation, honours journalists who write about religion in the secular press with accuracy, impartiality and in an ecumenical spirit.

"The secular media show a great ignorance of and suspicion towards religion," said Marujo. "On the other hand, religious institutions show a lack of confidence in the media and seem to be unable to understand the fundamentals of journalism as well as to grasp the challenges of modern information technology."

High salaries audacious

ENI–A German Catholic bishop has lashed out at the rise of top management salaries by up to 30 per cent at the same time as companies are plunged into bankruptcy and jobs are cut.

Reinhard Marx, chairperson of the German episcopal Commission for Societal and Social Matters, told a local newspaper he thought such salary hikes were "audacious."

"We are moving away from a social market economy to capitalism, where only the yields count and where those people who have only capital yields in mind are rewarded," the bishop said.

Priest played and won

ENI–A Roman Catholic priest who won approximately US$70,000 in a Polish television game show has said he plans to use the money for a new church in his parish that has been under construction for the past three years.

"I watched the program by accident, although there are no accidents in life, and I thought, why not give it a try," said the Rev. Tomasz Janicki.

The 45-year-old priest was speaking after starring in *Are You Playing Or Not?*, a weekly quiz featuring cash-filled suitcases. He said he had opted out of the quiz at the right moment, since the final suitcase contained only a quarter of the sum he won.

Prostitution and AIDS

ENI–The Malawi Council of Churches and a multi-faith grouping, the Public Affairs Committee, are urging the government to introduce a law barring prostitution, which they say is fuelling the spread of HIV/AIDS.

"If we are to succeed in the fight against HIV/AIDS then the government needs to enforce a law to prohibit prostitution because it's one of the major ways through which the pandemic is spreading fast," said church council chairperson Rev. Howard Matiya Nkhoma, a Presbyterian minister. He lamented, "Some people venture into prostitution to earn a living while others do it for pleasure. The problem in both cases is that it's the innocent who are affected."

Two years ago the government angered civil society organizations when it announced it would arrest all prostitutes roaming the streets at night. Hundreds of young women found on the streets and those staying at inns were arrested. Rights activists said arrests were often made for no apparent reason and argued there was no law barring prostitution.

None of the women arrested were charged with prostitution, but rather with vagrancy. Many were represented by lawyers paid for by civil society organizations. With those found guilty receiving minimum fines, the government suspended its action, saying it was futile.

Trauma, tragedy, tradition

The steel girder cross casts a long shadow

BY ANDREW FAIZ

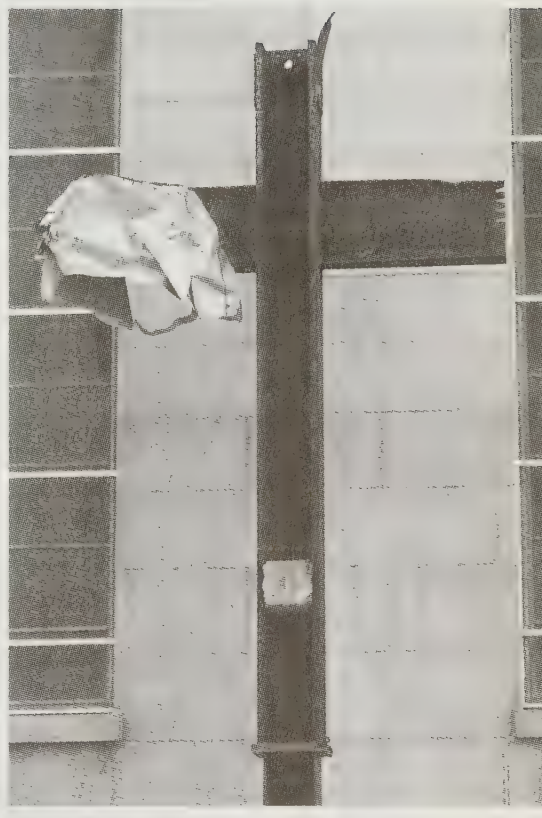


PHOTO: ANDREW FAIZ

The steel girder cross can be found kitty-corner from the World Trade Center site in New York City. Though it did once sit on the site, it is no longer there. It has been moved away from the tourist centre which now surrounds what was once the heart of commerce, trade and, most importantly, human interaction.

According to its legend, this steel girder cross was found in the wreckage of the south tower a few weeks after the attack. Note the construction sheeting draped over it as if a shroud. There is a now well-known photograph of this crossed girder crowned with an American flag, with firemen and other heroes of the terrorist-carnage praying below.

I say legend because it has become something of a myth—a small permutation of the events of September 11, 2001. It apparently came from the wreckage exactly as now seen and was blessed immediately by a Franciscan upon request of the workers. The girder became a symbol of something in the aftermath of the trauma. The website Operation Save America puts it this way:

"Men prayed there. They looked for answers to the uncertainties and tragedies of life. They took account of their own lives. They looked to the One who hung on a cross so many years ago, and found refuge in the steadfast arms of Jesus. He was the One who made sense out of an Old Rugged Cross. Perhaps, He could make sense out of this one."

The cross is a resilient image; easily reproduced and adapted. It is also a perfect metaphor that subsumes myriad interpretations: it is Good Friday, and it is Easter; it is death and it is salvation; in His death on the cross is our birth. In the United States, it has another dimension; more from Operation Save America:

"Yes, this cross, more than anything else, symbolizes both God's call and His love for America. He is calling us to repent (turn back to Him)."

Let me understand: God so loved America that he had 3,000 of its innocents murdered by a handful of fanatics, which led to further carnage and death? I don't think so; I find it un-Christ-like, but I recognize it as a persistent opinion that knows no end.

Peggy Noonan, the conservative commentator for the *Wall Street Journal*, wrote a month after the attack, in the week the steel girder cross was found, that both God and manly-men were returning to a city whose vanities till the attacks were marked by the over-educated and the effete, like lawyers, editors and orthodontists.

And, perhaps because of these enforced interpretations, the cross can no longer be found on the WTC grounds. It has been moved away from the official site, to the side of a non-descript church. The site itself is now adorned by photographs and slogans which would not be out of place at any social services office. The cross has no place in the now-secular environment.

Of course, I am only guessing that is why it was moved. A chain-link fence and a viewing deck surround the WTC site—a massive hole filled with rubble and trucks, where the bones of victims are still being found. I was there recently at one in the afternoon and again at one in the morning, and it was steady with locals and tourists, taking photographs as they would at any other tourist site; as they might well have when the towers were there.

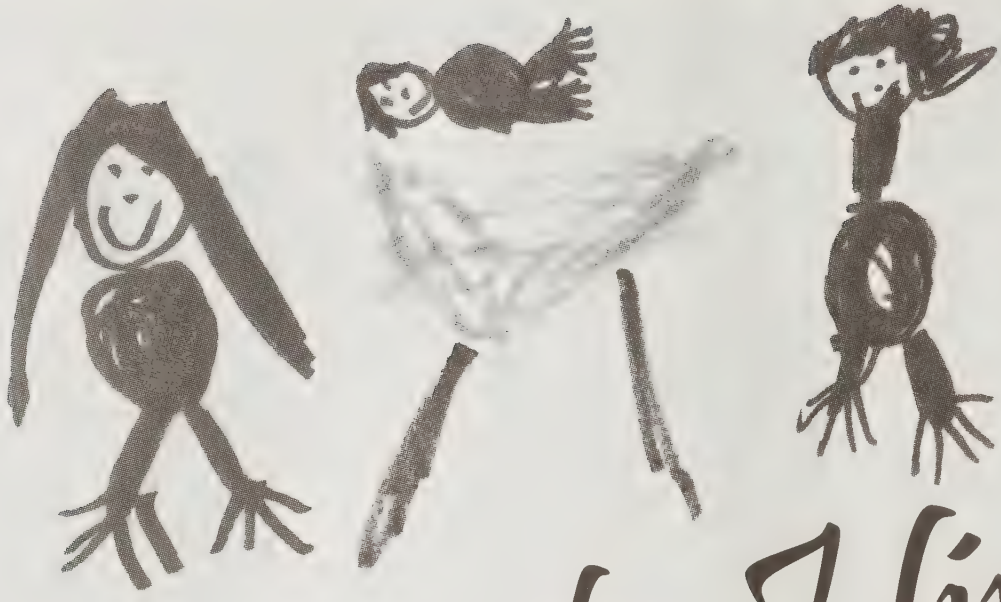
But the cross is not there and its absence makes me think of Christmas. This is the one season every year when we conflate our secular lives with our religious ones. And a month from now, our religious existence will be moved, once more, to the side. But don't get me wrong: I'm not accusing you, or me, of hypocrisy. In the absence of Christendom—which only the institutional church seems to believe still exists—this is the way we must survive.

We are still Christians as we traverse the world, outside the care of the church, and sometimes we forget that. We wait for the sanctioned moment—trauma, tragedy or tradition—to express ourselves. We think we are alone in secularism. But we're not. On the two occasions I walked the WTC tourist site, I saw us—Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Jews, others—praying.

Christendom is dead; long live Christ.

Andrew Faiz is a writer, producer and filmmaker. He is also managing editor of the Record. You can reach him at mngeditor@presbyterianrecord.ca.

Mackenzie Oldfield (age 5), Etobicoke, Ont.



Hymns to Him

"Angels we have heard on high/ Sweetly singin' o'er the plains." Are you singing those words in your head? Of course you are. Carols are the soundtrack of our Christmases: They exist not only in the church, but in the kitchen and the dining room; they're there when we meditate on the glorious gift of the birth and also when we hungrily rip the wrapping off our presents. And in a very profound way, they are also the most personal of all the hymns we know. "Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!"

EYES ON THE STAR

Never heard a Christmas carol I didn't like. If they're played all day long from November 1 to December 25, that's fine with me. When else are you going to hear those beautiful old songs that speak profoundly of Jesus' birth? After December 25 that's it—no more carols until next year, except maybe for one or two that carry on until Epiphany.

Epiphany reminds me of the carol I love most—*We Three Kings*. An odd choice, perhaps, when one could choose *It Came upon a Midnight Clear* (my second favourite, especially the third verse) and innumerable others. Despite those other lovely songs, it's still *We Three Kings* that pops into my head when asked to name my favourite.

Why? Well, it's so visual and the tune and tempo gloriously grand. Ever since I was a little girl singing in Sunday school, mental pictures captured my imagination as those three regal wise men traversed mile upon lonely mile through desert storms, over wild moors and rocky mountains, always guided by the star of wonder. Those three kings, with their caravans laden with royal provisions and gifts piled on bedecked camels who with their ungainly swinging gait slowly made their way to Bethlehem.

We attended a concert in London, Ontario, where a brass ensemble performed Christmas music. *We Three Kings* was on the program, the highlight of my evening. The music began softly, far off in the distance, a tiny bell tinkling on a swaying camel. Closer and closer the entourage approached, the brass instruments swelling to crescendo as the noble party passed right before us and then moved on slowly, the stately music fading away until the tinkling of that tiny bell vanished into the ether. A performance I'll never forget, and one that brought back the visions from my childhood.



Elizabeth Munro (age 10), Toronto, Ont.

Oh, those Christmas concerts! Shepherds and angels and small boy-kings trying to look dignified as they tripped on their dads' brocade housecoats and squinted out from under lopsided cardboard crowns secured by their mothers' tea towels. Singing in whispery grave voices, they presented their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh wrapped in fancy tinfoil boxes entwined with bright strings of old beads.

At one concert, a tiny king trailed along behind the others, obviously on his last wobbly legs. The hour was late; he had traversed far down that long frightening church aisle and was tuckered out. Arriving at his destination, he slumped on the chancel steps, peered at the sleeping baby Jesus, sighed, poked a hole in his scratchy grey beard and sucked his thumb! Safe at last! He had followed the star, completed the journey.

Christmas reminds us to keep our eyes on the star, to continue the awesome journey, difficult and long as it may sometimes be, believing that we too will one day arrive at the place of perfect light presenting our gifts, praising the risen King. Hallelujah!

– GWYNETH WHILSMITH





Morgan Ticehurst (age 10), Beaconsfield, Que.

FROM THE BYRE TO THE CROSS

It keeps changing as I hear new ones, though I nearly always return to the old ones. But perhaps I return most often to Mary MacDonald's *Child In The Manger*:

Child in the manger, infant of Mary,
Outcast and stranger, Lord of all

The image of gentleness that comes through her first words—originally written in her native Gaelic—and through the well-loved Gaelic tune *Bunessan* is unlike any other musical experience that I know. It brings a contrast to the harshness of the other end of the earthly life of the same child, and it brings back the still-warm memory of being present at a birth in the early hours of the morning, more than 30 years ago. But if you had never heard the story before, what would you make of that second line? So much of the New Testament is in those few words.

I will have to admit to a happily sentimental attachment to the song. Every trip to the lovely little Hebridean island of Iona takes the traveller past a small memorial to Mary MacDonald just before the village of Bunessan, which gave its name to the tune. This is on the island of Mull, and when you pass through there, you know that in a few minutes you will be on the ferry to Iona. It's part of the annual ritual.

The music makes it inseparable in our minds from Eleanor Farjeon's even better known song, *Morning Has Broken*, also set to Bunessan. It isn't hard to find a connection between them:

Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden,
Sprung in completeness where His feet pass.

Another glimpse of that same child entering our collective consciousness on that journey from the byre to the cross. I don't really care about the historical accuracy of these stories. What I do care about is the way that the story of the beginning of the Christ child's life, the birth of Christianity, is implanted into our own lives through poetry and music. The modern hymn writers (and I count Mary Macdonald as a modern) serve us in the same way as the storytellers of 2,000 years ago by setting down the story in ways that will stay with us all our lives.

You want another favourite?

God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen. It was our wedding recessional march on Christmas Day, 1972.

– ANDREW FOSTER

KIND OF BLUE

Christmas Eve
In the dark the streets are silent,
Tumult in the city has ceased.
In the light the snow is drifting,
But no mortal soul it greets;
Yet for some the night is weary,
Those whose hands would fashion the feast.

And for some the night is solace,
Those who sleep in empty beds,
Those who long for life for their children,
When the ways of death they would tread.
Night has covered pain and sorrow,
Those for whom no table is spread.

But for them the dark was radiant,
For their child was born that night,
He who tasted life to the utmost,
Died that we might live by his right.
You who knew the dregs of all our sorrow,
May our darkness bring us your light.
– Geoff Johnston; Picardy, *Book of Praise* 542

This is a kind of blue Christmas song. It dates from the seventies, but its origins are somewhat earlier. I had long been irritated by the accumulated expectations of the winter solstice, those activities we have come to call Christmas traditions. The first verse was written out of our experience as parents, years of spending the small hours of Christmas morning shuffling five piles of stocking presents on the bed, ensuring that they were all the same size, and then retiring to the kitchen to complete the preparation of the traditional Christmas breakfast, pans of outrageously rich croissants, which had to be finished and left in the refrigerator overnight.

The second verse comes from my wife Mary Lou's experience. In the seventies she was teaching in a Toronto high school which was in process of reinventing itself with an ambitious adult education program. Many of her students were single parents whose children were having a hard time growing up. They were poor and alone, and the picture-book Christmas of the magazines was far from their reality.

Many years later, in 1997, I was responsible for Christmas Sunday at Westminster, Pierrefonds, a suburb of Montreal. The text was John 1:14: "We beheld His glory, full of grace and truth." For that occasion I rewrote the last verse:

But for them the dark was radiant,
For their child was born that night,
He who is the truth of the ages,
Come that we might walk in his light
You who vanquished all our folly,
Grant that we may live by your right.

– GEOFF JOHNSTON



Hope Schneider (age 8), Branchton, Ont.



Jessica Baraiya, Mississauga, Ont.

PRECIOUS MEMORIES

In July 1959, some friends and I decided to form a folk song circle to further interest in traditional folk music from different countries. We welcomed anyone who wished to sing, play or listen. It was a great success. Soon our house became too small and we moved into a local hall where we met every first and third Wednesday of the month. Performers usually were limited to three or four songs as closing time came quickly. Forty-six years on we are still meeting.

On December 30, 1960 we were holding our Christmas party at our house. Friends came with guitars, lutes, dulcimer and banjo. One brought a book of Oxford carols. These we sang, as well as contemporary ones. Some of our friends were from foreign countries to study at the University of British Columbia, so we heard foreign carols too. I had three children who were helping to decorate the tree, singing and listening to the music. During the evening I took them up to bed telling them they could listen but not to get out of bed! When I went later to check them, I got halfway up the stairs and heard a guitar quietly playing and someone singing. I looked in the half open door. Our good friend Rolf from Norway was singing *Silent Night* to them in Norwegian. I crept quietly back downstairs. The children are grown up now and Rolf is back in Norway but I have never forgotten the scene that night. *Silent Night* will always bring back precious memories to me and sometimes a few tears.

– J. H. MOSS

A NEW AND GLORIOUS MORN

They begin playing on the radio earlier every year—those old familiar sounds alerting us to the oncoming season filled with joy, hope, family and friends. There are so many favourites, how to choose just one … *Joy To The World* brings fond memories as it has always been the last hymn sung by candlelight on Christmas Eve before we head home, visiting friends and family along the way. But I think *O Holy Night* is my favorite. "The stars are brightly shining" triggers memories of starlit walks on frosty snow, thinking about how these same stars are shining over loved ones near or far on this very night and how they once shone over the baby in Bethlehem. "It is the night of our dear Savior's birth"—that God loved us enough to send His only Son into this world as an infant—"A new and glorious morn" —that Jesus is still being born into people's hearts around the world on this very night, that there is still so much hope in such a dark world. It all brings tears to my eyes with a hope that many will come to believe through the message of song during this special time of the year.

– ANGELA CRUICKSHANK

WITH ANTHEMS SWEET

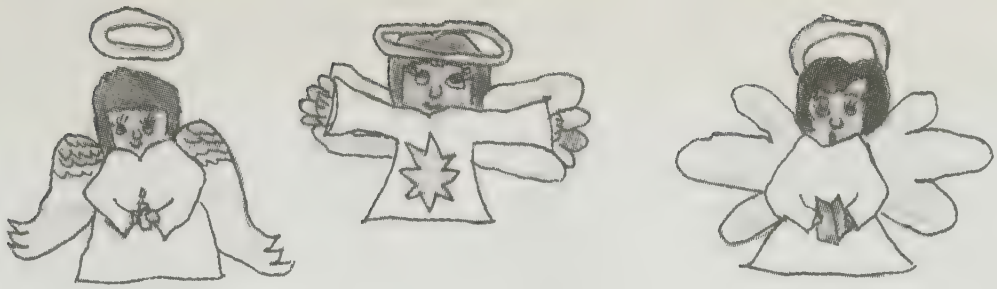
My favourite thing about Christmas is singing Christmas hymns! I love so many of them that it's hard to pick a favourite.

I do particularly like *What Child is This?* because of its minor key, which makes it sound mysterious and intriguing (like the baby Jesus!). I also love "whom angels greet with anthems sweet"—it takes me to the stable that night where all is still and silent but for the angels greeting the babe for the first time. (I love how the hymn always uses babe instead of baby!)

The third reason is of course because I love *Greensleeves*, the tune to which it is sung. It has such a familiar sound and interesting history. It was apparently first licensed or registered in 1580 to a Richard Jones (with a set of lyrics that were not in the least religious, or even very respectable), but it is probably older still. Some theories have it that Henry VIII wrote the song. In any event, Henry's daughter Queen Elizabeth is said to have danced to it; Shakespeare mentioned it by name twice in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*; and traitors were hanged as hired bands of musicians played its strains in lugubrious tempo. Almost three centuries later, about 1865, William Chatterton Dix published *The Manger Throne*. Three stanzas were later culled from that poem and fitted to *Greensleeves*, thus creating *What Child Is This*?

As for hymns that are not my favourites (slight euphemism there): *The First Noel* and *We Three Kings*. I had to play them on the piano for a Christmas recital when I was little and the amount of practising required in order to play them without the music in front of me created a slight disdain in my heart that hasn't really gone away with age. (I had hoped it would!) Too much of a good thing I guess!

– ERIN WALTON



WITH GLORIOUS SPLENDOUR

Christmas is an emotional time. And depending on what has been going on in my life over the year, it is experienced accordingly. Who is around? Who is no longer around? What has been gained? What has been lost? Christmas is a time where the weight and the release of life's fullness is absorbed and processed for me.

So how do Christmas carols fit into all this? I must confess that the first thing that moves me about a carol is the music. If I like the music, I'll sing it with feeling even if the theology is second-rate. But when I think about my favourite Christmas carols I experience a combination of beautiful music, usually in the minor key, with beautiful words.

By far my favourites are: *Lo, How A Rose E're Blooming* (*Book of Praise* 151) and *Of Eternal Love Begotten* (BP 163). A close second to these two is *It Came Upon A Midnight Clear* (BP 148).

It Came is all about a song; the one angels are said to have sung when the shepherds encountered them in the fields outside Bethlehem. The song is taken as a promise, a prophecy, yet to be fulfilled. In the five verses we are taken through the great joy of Jesus' birth, through the history that follows, without prettying it up—"But with the woes of sin and strife, the world has suffered long"—through our own personal lives, which are not pretty at times either—"And ye, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low"—to a final place of hope against hope—"when peace shall over all the earth God's promised splendours fling, and all the world take up the song, which now the angels sing."

Of Eternal Love Begotten has a certain sad but high nobility to it. Singing it brings me to a place of inner peace. It helps me meditate on the God who is at the centre of my life, but is not always easy to access in the midst of life's chaotic struggles. Its theology is high, rooted in the ancient creeds. It's all about Christ, but a Christ who "Of eternal love begotten uncreated One-in-Three … Christ, the Alpha and Omega, Christ, the Source, the End will be of the things that are, that have been, and that future years shall see, evermore and evermore." Even though some may think this theology remote from everyday life, there is a certain grounding it provides for those of us with faith, a trust that we are held by a love much greater than all the turmoil and turbulence in and around us, revealed paradoxically, in "that birth forever blessed when the virgin, full of grace, by the Spirit's power conceiving, bore the Saviour of our race." Capturing the paradox between eternity and fragile temporality is not easy to do. Where words falter, music goes the distance.

Lo, How A Rose is unique in using the metaphor of a rose to convey something of the beauty and fragility of God's way of salvation in Jesus. How can a vulnerable little child embody universal redemption? How does a beautiful rose survive the tsunamis of life? And yet, the mystery of the gospel is that only a "child who felt our human woe … Who dost our weakness know…" can also "from sin and death [save] us and [share] our every load." And so, for me, the metaphorical aesthetic works beautifully. "Lo how a Rose e're blooming from tender stem hath sprung, Of Jesse's lineage coming as prophets long have sung. It came, a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter, when half spent was the night … This flower, whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air, dispels with glorious splendour our darkness everywhere." These words combined with the music, in a minor key, bring me to tears every time, tears of release and of peace.

— HARRIS ATHANASIADIS

GIVE ME TEARS FOR CHRISTMAS

By Andrew Foster

From the bairn in the byre
To the man on the cross
And the whole world between
A woman's tears were there

Mary the proud anxious girl
Shedding tears of childbirth
Mary the bereaved anguished woman
Shedding tears of grief
How little we know of her
How much she was one of us
How human she was
Cradling the baby in her arms
Cradling our Christ in her arms
Turning the first page of the story
The book that is open still

O my God
Give me this story for Christmas
Show me the faith of Mary for Christmas
Cradle me while the story unfolds
And if my faith one day grows dry
Give me the gifts of tears.

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WE DON'T NEED NO MANGER IN THE MARKET

By Ken Stright

No, we don't need no manger
in the market.
No manger in this market
for no Messiah.
We got too many Marys hanging
round with baby on breast begging
for bread.

We got Santa Claus and Nike and KFC
Don't need no Christ-child bouncing on knee.

No, we don't need no manger
in the market.
No manger in this market
for no Messiah.
We got too many Marys hanging
round with baby on breast begging
for bread.

Christmas time is profit, man,
bottom-line your wager.
Go to the mission, man and set up your manger.
And take all these Marys with you;
they only get in the way!

No, we don't need no manger
in the market.
No manger in this market
for no Messiah.
We got too many Marys hanging
round with baby on breast begging
for bread.

– WRITTEN WHILE ON MISSION WORK IN GUYANA.

I SAW JESUS IN GEORGETOWN TODAY

By Ken Stright

I saw Jesus in Georgetown today.
Yes!

Did you miss him? Too bad for you.

Jesus said to expect his coming … and there he was!

He was in the market and little children touched him. He healed a vendor woman with a smile and threw out the rum demon from the coconut handler. He even gave living water to the Pepsi seller. Imagine! He broke bread with the owner of the roti shop. He told the beggar woman at the stelling to pick up her mat and go home. He caused quite a stir with his words with the moneychangers. He made people turn away as he carried the lumber in the heat of the day. Not even the crazy man does that.

Did you miss him? Too bad for you.

Will you look tomorrow, or maybe the next? Some say he often come Georgetown way, especially to the market, but not so much to Queenstown or Kitty, but down near the docks, down with the poor, the sick, the sinners.

Did you miss him? Too bad for you.

But I have an idea!

Why not go to the market and let the children touch you, just a little and then smile at an old vendor woman, and look the man with the rum demon right in the eye and drink Pepsi cola and eat roti with the people you meet and put a few coins in that crippled hand and send her on her way. Maybe if you do, Jesus will be there at the market, tomorrow, too.

(Stelling: Boat landing Roti: East Indian food somewhat like bread)

– WRITTEN WHILE SERVING IN GEORGETOWN, GUYANA.

STREET MISSION

Big city, big problems. Living amongst the wealthy and powerful of Toronto are the poor and helpless. According to the City of Toronto's homelessness report card in 2003 nearly half a million households had incomes below the poverty level. Over 30,000 individuals, including almost 5,000 children, stayed in a housing shelter at least once. Over 70,000 households were on the waiting list for subsidized housing.

The Presbyterian Church has been responding to these needs for over a century, providing solace to the vulnerable. Evangel Hall opened in 1913 as a soup kitchen. That wasn't enough and it continued to grow, to evolve. ▶



Clean, used clothing is available for all at Evangel Hall's Thrift Shop. They are also always looking for donations of seasonal clothing and other items.



More than just a shelter

Evangel Hall provides a hope for the future

BY AMY MACLACHLAN



Cutting the ribbon to inaugurate the new Evangel Hall building on Adelaide St. West, in Toronto. From left: Sean Gadon, Director, Partnerships, Affordable Housing Office, City of Toronto; resident Khatija Tammi and her son Keith; Joe Taylor, Executive Director; Rev. Karen Bach, President, Board of Directors; BeverlyBowman, Director, Service Canada.

PHOTOS: ABEL PANDY AND ANDREW FAIZ

The new Evangel Hall building does more than offer shelter for Toronto's less fortunate. It offers safety, respect and a place to call home. At the grand opening celebration on October 19, those gathered listened to Khatija Tammi, a woman with two young children who fled her abusive husband. She told the crowd that being homeless was the most difficult for her eight-year-old son, Shawn.

"A home is more than a shelter at night," said Tammi, who came to Canada from Kenya in 1991, "it is part of your identity. For my son, the knowledge that we had no home to call our own was devastating. He didn't dream about being a fireman or police officer when he grew up. He just wanted a home."

Shawn's grades soon began to drop. He lost his friends. Already having to change

PRESBYTERIAN Record

Random Acts of Kindness Calendar



Richard Bullock (age 13), Mount Forest, Ont.

Random Acts of Kindnes

Read the scripture for each day or have someone read it to you. Do the act of kindness o
If you are unable to do it, say a prayer about it. You can also do things to make yourself

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	We
DECEMBER 2006 **3**  1ST ADVENT SUNDAY **Jeremiah 33:14-15** Rake up any leftover leaves on your front lawn or your neighbour's lawn.	**4**  **Malachi 3:1** Write a thank you/Christmas note to your Sunday School teacher for her/his dedicated work.	**5**  **Micah 5:2** Pray for the Middle East where Jesus was born, especially the town of Bethlehem, that there may be peace.	 **Isaiah 9:2** Turn on a spe people who li
10  2ND ADVENT SUNDAY **Isaiah 35:5-6** Pray for all who are disabled – the blind, deaf, and so on.	**11**  **Isaiah 40:3-5a** Listen to Christmas music or watch a special Christmas show that has Christian values.	**12**  **Isaiah 40:9** Pray for all those who are out of work right now.	 **Isaiah 40:11** Do something or bird: take y bour's dog for or small anim
17  3RD ADVENT SUNDAY **Isaiah 9:6** Help your school teacher or Sunday School teacher tidy up.	**18**  **Luke 1:11-14** Surprise someone with a phone call: a grandparent, a shut in, a friend.	**19**  **Luke 1:26-31** Pray for those who are alone at this time.	**Luke 1:39-45** Is there a spe a nephew, a g need to buy a
24  4TH ADVENT SUNDAY **Luke 2:8-19** Draw and color a bright star to hang high up in a room where you can see it.	**25**  **CHRISTMAS** **Luke 2:1-7** Say a special prayer thanking God for the gift of Jesus.	**26**  **Luke 2:15-20** Pray for Africans who celebrate Kwanza today. Ask an adult to help you learn about Kwanza.	**John 1:1-5** Offer to run a for someone elderly or disa
31  **2 Corinthians 13:13** Celebrate the ending of the old year and the beginning of a new year with a prayer of thanksgiving to God.	JANUARY 2007 **1**  **HAPPY NEW YEAR** **Galatians 4:4-7** Smile a lot, especially at those who look unhappy or sad.	**2**  **1 John 5:1-2** Make a list of ways to show your love for God in this new year.	 **1 John 5:3-5** Cut some goo newspaper ar family or frien

Calendar

BY L. JUNE STEVENSON



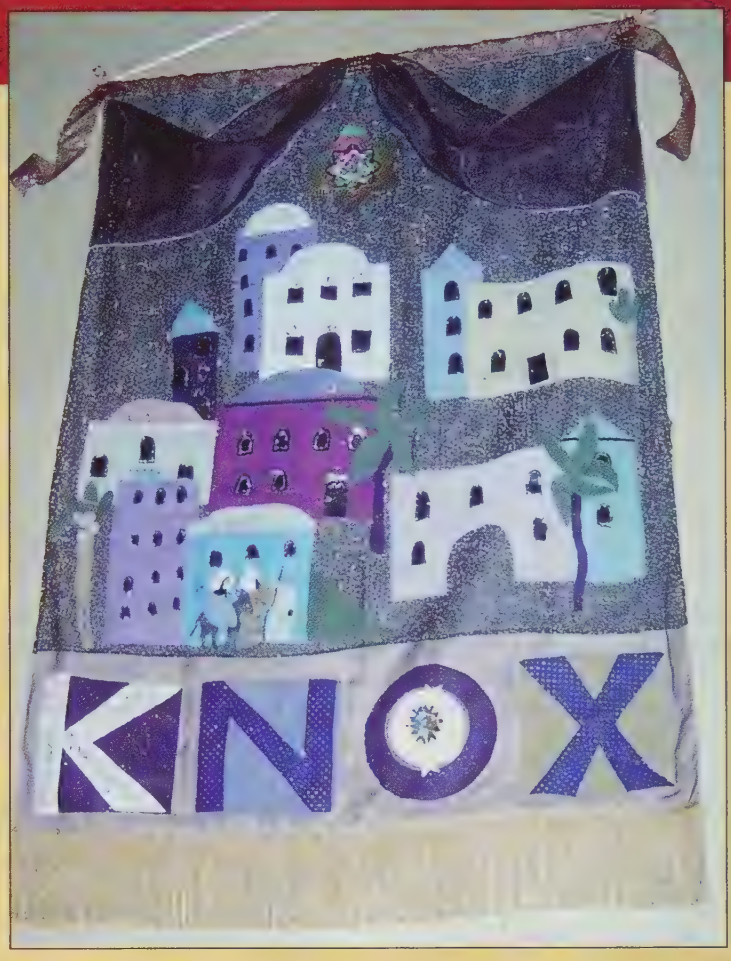
mething similar to it.
hers feel good about the season.

sday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6 tonight for all r.	7 **Isaiah 11:1-3a** Ask your teacher or family to help you cut a plant slip and put it in water to watch it root.	8 **Isaiah 50:4-7a** Make a Christmas card for your mail carrier and/or newspaper person.	9 **Isaiah 35:1-2** Sweep or shovel your path and/ or your neighbour's or an elderly person's.
13 for an animal or your neigh- clean out a bird r fishbowl.	14 **Isaiah 11:3b-5** Pay a sincere compliment to someone who especially needs it.	15 **Isaiah 49:5-6** Walk around your neighbourhood with a friend or a parent and admire the holiday lights.	16 **Isaiah 11:6** **HANUKKAH** Light a candle for all Jewish people as they celebrate the Feast of Dedication. Remember that Jesus was a Jew.
20 ve, an aunt, ent that you for? Do it.	21 **Luke 1:46-49** Help your mother to get ready for Christmas by dusting, cleaning and tidying up.	22 **Matthew 1:18- 24** Ask a special man in your life: father, neighbour, teacher, brother how you can help him today.	23 **Luke 2:1-5** Pray for all health care workers who look after the sick. Is there anything you can do for them?
27 e	28 **John 1:6-9** Pray that more people will come to see the light of God's love in the coming year.	29 **John 1:14-16** Help clear away the tree or decorations from Christmas.	30 **2 Corinthians 13:11-12** Start a list of kind things you can do in the New Year.
3 out of the it with your	4 **1 John 5:6-7** Pray for those who bring the good news of God's kingdom to the world.	5 **Matthew 2:1-5** Invite a friend to come to Sunday School and/or church with you and your family.	6 **EPIPHANY** **Matthew 2:7-12** Think about gifts you could bring Jesus in this new year.

We warmly thank all the children who submitted artwork for our cover contest.



Matthew Kowch (grade 6), Ilderton, Ont.



Grades 3 and 4 church school at Knox, Milton, Ont.



Janet (age 12), Paisley, Ont.



Olivia McGregor (age 7), Burlington, Ont.



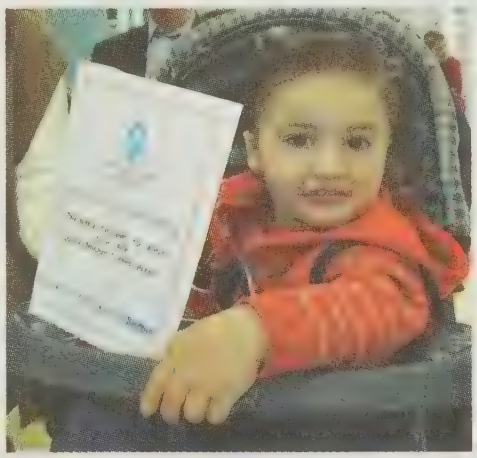
Above: Safe, dignified housing for 130 residents who once lived on the streets, in shelters or in insect-infested boarding houses is one of the many services provided in the new Evangel Hall building. Below: Keith is one of the new residents.

schools after fleeing his father, he feared he would be bounced around continually.

"After a while, he was so desperate that Shawn asked if we could live with daddy again because daddy has the house," said Tammi, who was pregnant with her second son, Keith, when she left her husband. "He wanted his own home so much that he wanted to move back in with a father who scared him."

The family had been living with Tammi's mother in a tiny apartment for several months. But the cramped quarters (Tammi and her two boys were squished into one bedroom) motivated her to find something else. When she heard about the new Evangel Hall residence, she submitted an application. They moved in last April, and are enjoying their two-bedroom apartment.

"I had started to lose hope, believing I would never get our family on its feet," she said, recalling how she felt before the move. "Now, with the encouragement of the staff of Evangel Hall, I have a new hope for the future."



She now volunteers at the centre, visits the drop-in program there, and will be going back to school for her high school equivalency.

"Shawn loves our new home so much that he says Evangel Hall is his home and he never wants to leave," said Tammi, smiling. "His grades are up and so are his hopes for the future."



DIGNITY AND RESPECT

Evangel Hall, a ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada since its inception in 1913, opened its new building in February. The $13-million six-storey facility in downtown Toronto includes 84 low-income housing units, as well as a medical clinic, commercial kitchen, counselling space, thrift store and a chapel. Between 50 and 200 people drop in for meals daily, with more attending special events and outings, addiction support groups and numerous outreach programs. The 130 residents are encouraged to get to know their neighbours, making the building a safe place to live. The building was funded by the federal government, the city of Toronto, the province, the PCC and individual donors.

"Meeting physical needs is just the first step," said Evangel Hall director Joseph Taylor. "We also address the social and emotional needs we all share, regardless of economic status or housing situation. That's the need for a sense of belonging, the self-confidence to believe in oneself and to work towards a better future.

"Our drop-in survey made this point so clear to me," he continued, speaking at the grand opening celebrations. "Do you know the number one reason people gave for coming back to the Hall? It wasn't food. It wasn't clothing. The number one reason was fellowship and community. A place where people are welcome and treated with dignity and respect.

"On behalf of Evangel Hall Mission, I thank each of you for enabling us to be your hands in this community."



Working for their guests

The Out of the Cold volunteers are privileged to help

BY STEVIE CAMERON

Some stopgap. Some band-aid. That's all our Out of the Cold program was meant to be when we started it at St. Andrew's on King Street in Toronto 15 years ago. We never dreamed we'd still be at it today; we were sure that by now our governments would have solved the shameful problems of poverty and homelessness that were infecting our city and so many others across Canada.

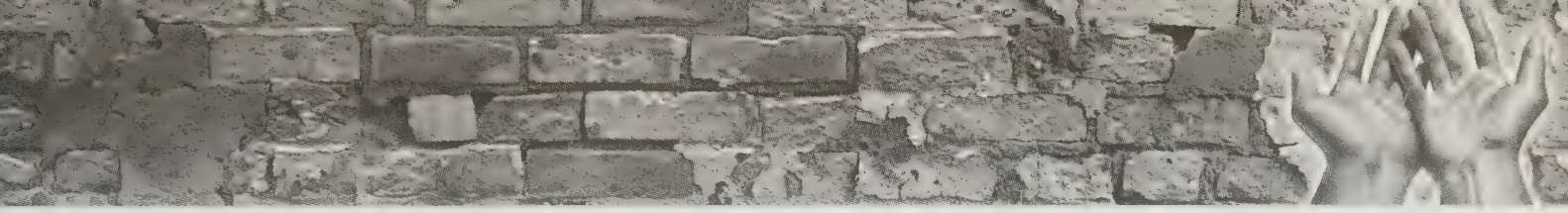
That didn't happen. If anything, our city, provincial and federal governments seem to have accepted poverty and homelessness as an unpleasant reality of modern life. The facts that our country is so wealthy and our budgetary surpluses so fat haven't made any difference at all. As a result, churches have quietly gone to work. Sharing everything from recipes, budgets and program ideas, existing Out of the Cold programs have helped church communities start new ones in small towns and big cities.

St. Andrew's has worked with dozens of Canadian churches of many denominations as well as with several non-church organizations that have started programs like ours. One of the best examples is Lawyers Feed the Hungry, a hugely successful program run at Osgoode Hall in downtown Toronto by lawyers who prepare and serve several meals every week.

Over the years, our own St. Andrew's program has not stayed exactly as it was when we opened; we have had to learn to adapt to changing times. But our principles have not budged an inch. All those years ago we decided our food would be the very best we could do, nutritious, carefully prepared and delicious: what we would serve our own families. We chose not to accept government money or money that came from gambling revenues. We chose not to use armed security guards. We chose to spend the donations we received on food and services for our guests, not on paid staff or on church repairs and maintenance.

Today we are running a year-round

PHOTOS: COURTESY ST. ANDREW'S, KING STREET, TORONTO



Our city, provincial and federal governments seem to have accepted poverty and homelessness as an unpleasant reality of modern life. The facts that our country is so wealthy and our budgetary surpluses so fat haven't made any difference at all

program, with a hot breakfast every Tuesday morning 12 months of the year, serving up to 120 people. Our Monday night dinner program, however, still only runs from November 1 to the middle of April and serves up to 260 people a night, but the services for the program have doubled since we started. We've added, for example, a very popular vegetarian menu to the dinner. Our dinner program has spun a new service we call Meals to Go—meals we send to people we hear about, regardless of church affiliation or income, who are in trouble. It could be a death in the family, an illness or a crisis such as sudden unemployment.

We give out hundreds of books—our guests are eager readers. We still run our clothing service, but we have added haircuts. We've started a Christmas card program modeled on the one run by First United Church in Vancouver's poverty-stricken Downtown Eastside; this involves a group of volunteers helping people track down the addresses of family and friends, helping them prepare a card, adding a picture of themselves to it and mailing it.

And over the last year, under the leadership of volunteer Cal Broeker, we have started offering counselling to get some of the most hardcore homeless off the streets and into decent housing. Cal has built warm and trusting relationships with street people across the city and with the workers in various housing services; as a result, to give just one example, he was able to move a desperately poor couple who had lived for years on a street corner beside our church into a decent apartment of their own.

But one of the most dramatic changes we've made happened last year when we decided to end our overnight sleepovers. Ever since we started Out of the Cold we had up to 100 people sleeping on mattresses on the floor of our church hall. Ending this service was a painful decision but we didn't hesitate. It happened for two reasons.

The first was that our overnight program, in the last year or two, had been constantly disrupted—between, say, 11 p.m. and 4 a.m.—by violent and aggressive men, determined to gain entry to the church. Some of them turned out to be drug dealers. They destroyed the peaceful quiet of the night, started fights and were far too difficult for the average volunteer to manage. Only Cal, a former soldier and undercover agent for the RCMP, could deal with them effectively.

The second reason was that the city of Toronto had opened new shelters, ones that could offer far better security, sleeping accommodation and bathroom facilities than we could.

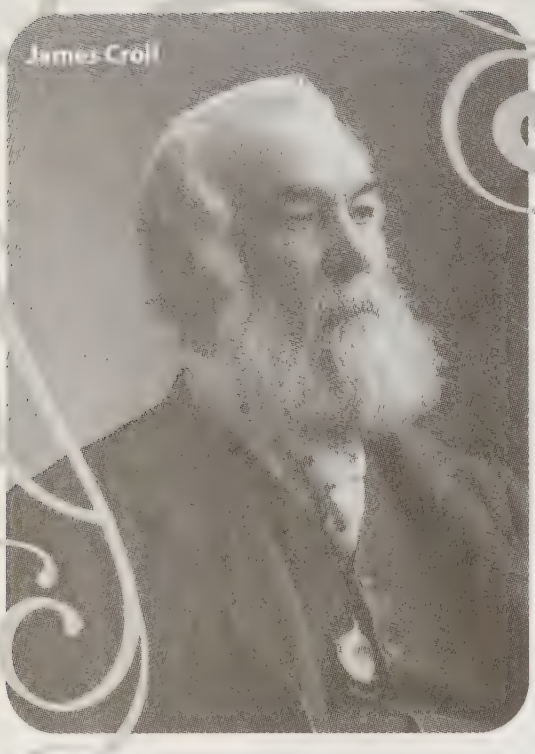
It was a no-brainer. As our then-minister, Cameron Brett, explained to our volunteers and the media, why should the homeless come to us for a mattress on the floor when they can have better beds and safe, uninterrupted nights at one of the new shelters?

Now, instead of keeping out drug-dealers and violent criminals, Cal and other volunteers are able to work on outreach and housing. He has found permanent homes for about 17 people and made warm and effective partnerships with the agencies that make these work.

Where are we now in our thinking? Where we always have been. We continue to work for our guests who have enriched our own lives and our church more than we can ever describe. We continue to look for better ways to serve them and we are looking beyond our own walls to find them their own homes. And for all of us who work in the program, it is a privilege. – *Stevie Cameron is a member of St. Andrew's, King St., Toronto.*



St. Andrew's volunteers enjoying themselves at our Annual Out of the Cold Appreciation Sunday. This luncheon is held once a year to thank all those who have faithfully participated over the past year and for the many years our program has been operating. Opposite page: The Out of the Cold Tuesday Morning Community Breakfast teams prepare the bacon, eggs, pancakes, coffee, tea, orange juice and milk.



THROUGHOUT THE WIDE DOMINION

The 130th anniversary of the *Presbyterian Record*

130 YEARS AGO:

"In 1872, I was appointed editor of the "Presbyterian" a monthly magazine of the Church of Scotland in Canada, which afforded congenial employment in the meantime, leading up to the editorship in 1875 of the "Presbyterian Record," the official organ of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, in which I continued until December, 1891, when I retired, being then in my 70th year, receiving an honorarium of one thousand dollars and many very kind letters from leading ministers of the Church in Canada and elsewhere."

So writes James Croil of Montreal in his eponymous autobiography published in 1918, two years after his death.

Twenty-six pages later, however, Mr. Croil records that: "In 1876, June 16th, the Church Agent of our Old Kirk Synod was appointed editor of the *Presbyterian Record* at an annual salary of six hundred dollars." Proving perhaps that even eminent journalists can have conflicting opinions with themselves about alleged facts! That said, it is the latter date that we acknowledge as the beginning of the *Presbyterian Record* which, though no longer the "official organ," has continued since then to be a monthly magazine for Presbyterians in Canada.

Inaugural Editorial

January 1876

To the members and adherents of The Presbyterian Church in Canada throughout the wide Dominion as well as to others in distant lands to whom these presents shall come, we make our best bow and beg leave to introduce ourselves with the homely salutation of "A Happy New Year!" We hope that the relationships on which the *Presbyterian Record* is about to enter may prove agreeable and profitable to its readers; that the acquaintanceship now begun may ripen into closer friendship and confidence and that in some small degree at least this magazine may be instrumental in promoting the interests of the church and the cause of the Redeemer in our land.

Only, let not the enthusiasm of kind friends and supporters lead them to expect too much at our hands and we will do the best we can to make the *Record* such a medium of communication as the church desires it should be. And, let it be remembered that as a literary journal the RECORD must of necessity occupy a subordinate position. It cannot take the place of the daily and weekly newspaper but must rather look to them itself as valuable sources of information; and it must yield the right of way to more ambitious monthlies and quarterlies. But in its humble sphere, it will try to realize that it *has* a mission and an important work to do.

There is much in the review of the past year to call forth thankfulness. It was a time of unusual public tranquility. The world of the Lord has free course in many lands, and was glorified in the conversion of sinners and Christian people in our own and other countries were brought under the influences of religious revivals such as the world has seldom seen. Calling to mind but one of many significant changes that transpired during the year 1875—the annexation of Fiji to the British Empire—may it not be said in very deed that Christianity *has* received the "heathen for its inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession." What shall we say of the goodness of God to our own Church? What can we say but this—"The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." In the union so long looked for and now so happily accomplished, "He crowneth the year with his goodness."

THE PRESBYTERIAN RECORD

Monthly

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All communications to be addressed to the Editor.

James Croil, 210 St. James St. Montreal.

The following is a letter just received by one of our Sabbath Schools from a little Indian orphan
– SEALKOTE ORPHANAGE, 10th July, 1875

MY DEAR SUPPORTERS,

Many thanks for your kind letter which I have received. It was very good of you to think of me and as I want to write you and am not able to do so just yet I have asked my kind mistress to write down all I wish to say. I am very happy in my school and my dear mistress is very kind to me. Our school hours are in the morning, from half past five to half past nine. I am in the 3rd class and have to study with six others; our head-master gives us a Bible lesson for 1/2 an hour every day before closing school; he is a native Christian. We then go and have our breakfast and assemble again in the school room when the bell rings at 10 o'clock. Our mistress conducts prayers and then hears us repeat our catechism and also hears us read from some pretty story book; at present we are reading about the good women the Bible speaks of; our lesson today will be about Ruth and Naomi after which we all sit down to our work. I can make all my own clothes and at present I am learning how to knit stockings; we are also taught how to cook as we are obliged to do all household work in our own homes. On Sunday we go to the Mission Church which is quite close to hear what our dear Saviour has done for us and what we ought to do for all his goodness to us. We have no instrument in our Church, but we form the choir and one of my companions who is named Jane leads the singing. How nice it must be to see the snow on the ground! We never see it as we live in the plains; we have had very hot weather but today it is much cooler; it having rained this morning. And now I must close as I think I have told you everything. I pray God may bless you all for having us taught His Holy word and trying to make us His children and with love and respects to all my dear supporters.

I remain your gratefully little Indian sister,
ESTHER

The Sabbath School

As nearly as we can estimate, the Union brought *seventy five thousand* Sabbath school children and *seven thousand five hundred* teachers into connection with The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Recognizing the importance of the Sabbath school in itself and how essential it is to the well-being, if not to the very existence of the church, it will be our endeavour from time to time to advocate its claims, to furnish information respecting its progress and to offer such suggestions as shall occur to us or to others of larger experience for increasing its usefulness and efficiency. As opportunity occurs we shall esteem it a pleasure to have a few words with the children in a quiet littler corner of the *Record* all for themselves. We are sorry we cannot hold out the inducement of the beautiful pictures they find in their own Sunday school magazines but we shall do our best to

interest them always remembering that they have the good taste and the good sense to like short addressses very much better than long ones. We do want to introduce ourselves to the children and here is our first salutation to them.

DEAR CHILDREN, we wish you too a very Happy New Year and many returns for the season! While you delight to sing with heart and voice, "I'm glad I'm in this army" your teachers are so glad to meet you every Sunday and they are very sorry when you are prevented by sickness or any other cause from being present in your class. Think of this and how pleased the dear Saviour will be to listen to your songs of praise in the Sabbath school and make up your minds that you will try to be more regular in your attendance this year than ever before and that you will have your lessons better prepared and "if at first you don't succeed, Try, try again."

A Fair Representation of Talent

Miscellanea

The Strength of Presbyterianism

Recent events have directed more than ordinary attention to the position and prospects of the Presbyterian body throughout the world. In the first place, there have been the schemes for union, promoted in the United States, in Canada and in Great Britain; and in the next place, there has been the little excitement arising from a sort of internecine struggle in several places on various questions and foolish and unjustifiable assaults which have been made upon it by opponents outside.

No religious denomination occupies a prouder position or has before it a brighter prospect than The Presbyterian Church in Canada at the present time. For a number of years past it has steadily increased in number and strength, until now, in its various ramifications, it is one of the largest and most influential of all the Protestant churches in the world. At the Presbyterian Council held in London, England, on July 1st, to devise plans for a general confederation, there were representatives present from different Presbyterian churches, whose united pastors amounted to 13,199 and with whom there were not less than 15,116 congregations. In addition to these there were about 4,950 congregations, with at least 2,741 ministers not represented on that occasion. According to these tables there are thus a total of 15,940 ministers and 17,857 congregations. In these there is a fair representation of the talent and wealth and influence of the different countries; and it is therefore easy to form an idea of what a powerful organization it is and of what an amazing influence it may and does exert.

The history of the Presbyterian Church has ever been characterized by an unshrinking maintenance of evangelical principles; and a vigorous, enterprising spirit in the promotion of education and Christian missions. No community has done more to check the progress of infidelity and to counteract the errors of Popery; whilst in Sunday schools and colleges and by home and foreign missions it has and is still promoting the diffusion of those principles by which alone society can be reformed. In the united forms which are now being brought about it will have still larger resources and greater facilities for fulfilling its evangelical mission and it will be cause for profound regret if through any feelings of pride or pique the beauty of the union should be marred or the efficiency of the body weakened. These are times when, above all others, unity and energy are needed on the part of the churches; and to secure these in the great Presbyterian body in a more eminent degree and thereby to render it a still stronger and more efficient organization every member should be willing to forego personal and party considerations and to consider only that by which the general interests of the body can be best promoted. *Scottish American.*

Montreal, 1st January, 1876

The statement made in the *Prospectus* respecting the price of the RECORD was somewhat ambiguous we must allow. To remove all misapprehensions, we beg leave now the state that *any number of copies will be sent to one address for 25 cents per annum – free of postage.* If that is not cheap enough, we give it up. Single subscribers must pay 60 cents. As a rule, we cannot afford to pay "the usual commissions" to canvassers and agents, but we hope that in every congregation some one will be found to work for us and further our interests—for the love they bear to the Church.

A large number of orders have already been received for which we record our best thanks and we take encouragement from the kind expressions, which accompanied them in many instance. A still larger number, no doubt, are either on the way or "under consideration;" but as we are only printing *thirty thousand* copies for January, some who may be waiting "just to see how we look" are in danger of being disappointed—not with our good looks, we hope, but what will be a great misfortune for them—in not being able by and by to get a copy of the first number for love or money. If any are expecting us to offer prizes for the largest list of subscribers, they too will be disappointed. It is only veterans in the service who can hold out such tempting inducements as Splendid Books and Chromos and Silver-plated spoons!

We have sent a few specimen numbers to Ministers of the Church whose orders had not reached us at the time of dispatching this January number and will gladly do the same for any one else on application but from this time forth we shall discard all old dispatch lists and regulate our circulation strictly by our own *bona fide* subscription list.

Contributors will bear with us if, reminding them of the numerous claims on our limited space, we ask them to condense their communications as much as possible and occasional *Correspondents* will please bear in mind that a cardinal point with the *Record* is— "There will be no place found in its columns for controversy".

"Today, we demand the ear of the powerful ... Grandmothers are worth listening to. We demand to be heard."– THE TORONTO STATEMENT, AUG 13, 2006



Marching in the light of God

Grandmothers make themselves heard across the world



Top: March of the Grannies. Above: Magdeline Ramakobo and members of the Alenandra Gogos, a grandmother's group in South Africa.

BY IAN MCDONALD

We are fighting for our rights as grannies," says Magdeline Ramakobo of Alexandra, South Africa, shouting to be heard over the roar of grandmothers' voices filling the streets of Toronto. "We have to be recognised. We are so tired of not being taken like people."

In the hours before the opening of the 16th International AIDS Conference that draws 24,000 delegates to Toronto, the streets are filled with the sound of grandmothers proclaiming their song: "We are marching in the Light of God."

"As grandmothers from Africa and Canada, we were drawn together in Toronto for three days in August 2006 by our similarities: our deep love and undying devotion to our children and grandchildren; our profound concern about the havoc that HIV/AIDS has inflicted on the continent of Africa," declares the Toronto statement.

On the eve of the conference, more than 300 African and Canadian grandmothers came to Toronto to participate in a Grandmothers Gathering hosted by the Stephen Lewis Foundation.

The Toronto Statement: "We are African grandmothers from Kenya, Malawi and Mozambique; from Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa and Swaziland; from Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, raising the children of our beloved late sons and daughters. We come to the end of this historic

gathering filled with emotions: we are grateful for the chance we have been given—at long last—to make our voices heard."

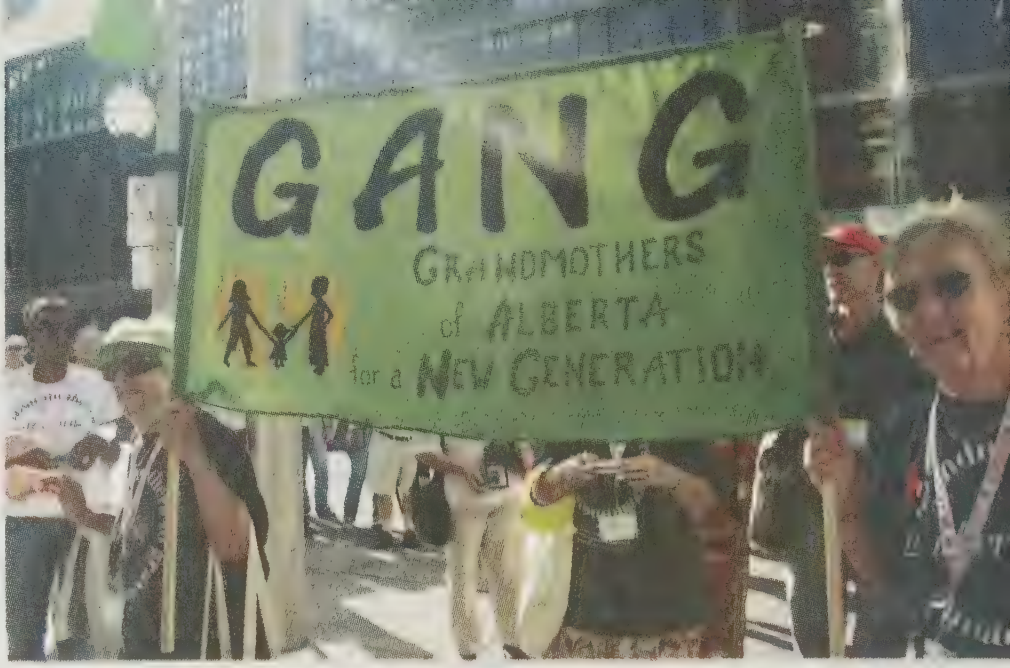
"Because we are the ones who are carrying the burden," says Ramakobo. "Because our children are dead now we are looking after our grandchildren. I'm 66 years of age, how am I going to raise my grandchild?"

Like her, each African grandmother marching in Toronto has stories to share of daily struggle for survival in caring for some of the 13 million children already orphaned by the AIDS crisis.

As the march ends, two grandmothers stand to read what has become known as the "Toronto Statement," on what the last three days have meant. It reflects, on the part of the Canadian grandmothers, a profound experience.

The Statement: "We are acutely conscious of the enormous debt owed to a generation of women who spent their youth freeing Africa, their middle age reviving it, and their older lives sustaining it. We will not rest until they can rest."

"To hear the stories of these incredibly brave women," says Donna Gene Browns, a grandmother from Toronto, one of many struggling for words to adequately describe the experience. "When you hear that many of these women … they sit down at the dinner table and they say 'children we don't have enough food again tonight, we will just say thank you to God that we're alive.'"







Grandmothers from across the globe join in a common cause.

The Statement: "We recognize that our African friends are consumed each day with the business of surviving, and so we have offered—and they have accepted—the loan of our voices."

"And we're absolutely appalled," says Jane Earl of St. Margaret's Bay, Nova Scotia, "at how little help they've been given over the years. So we've decided we can make a difference."

The Statement: "We pledge to act as their ambassadors, raising the volume on their long-suppressed stories until they are heard, understood and acted upon."

For the African grandmothers, the statement also reflects the sheer importance of being heard even as they struggle daily to meet basic needs: "It is our solemn duty to the millions of grandmothers whose voices have never been heard that gives us the courage to raise those needs to demands."

"And that is why we have left our homes to come here," says Ramakobo as she marches. "To fight for our rights." Her new Canadian friends have heard her, and this is reflected in the Statement: "We promise to apply pressure on governments, on religious leaders, and on the international community."

"Grandmothers! United!"—they shout together to the beat of a famous Latin America freedom chant: "Will Never Be Defeated!"

"We would like to see Canadians using their voices," says Esther Lupafya, echoing the sentiments of the Statement. An HIV worker in Malawi, though not a grandmother herself, she has come for the main conference as a partner of PWS&D.

Developing our ability to hear these voices promises to strengthen and transform the relationships that connect the church across continents. We see it in the campaign of PWS&D. And in the Toronto Statement we can with great clarity see the transformative, liberating power of listening to the voices of our colleagues, counterparts, and perhaps even friends in the developing world. As we, like the Canadian grandmothers marching in Toronto, grow in our capacity to hear.

The Statement: "Through our new discovery—grandmother to grandmother solidarity—we carried ourselves and one another through the grief to where we are this morning. May this be the dawn of the grandmothers' movement."

Ian McDonald is a documentary maker who attended the XVI International AIDS Conference supported by the Atlantic Mission Society and PWS&D. He is a member of the International Affairs Committee, and editor of www.DevelopmentFaithAndJustice.net .

For a film of the Grandmothers' march and the complete Toronto Statement please visit our website.

PHOTOS: (THIS PAGE AND PREVIOUS PAGE) IAN MCDONALD

A lot of joy

Waterloo-Wellington is brimming with cutting-edge congregations

BY JENNIFER HIGGS

In a growing region that has several universities and colleges, it's no surprise that children and youth ministries are the focus for numerous churches in the Waterloo-Wellington presbytery. Sunday schools are being renewed and some congregations are offering innovative mid-week family programs.

The presbytery covers the geographical counties of Waterloo and Wellington, which lie to the west of Toronto. It is divided into four quadrants: Cambridge, Kitchener-Waterloo, Guelph and the Northern Quadrant (nicknamed the Northern Kingdom).

The 29 charges and 34 congregations make Waterloo-Wellington the most populous presbytery in Canada. Although membership has declined in the past few years, the number of people attending services has increased.



The congregation of Knox, Guelph presenting gown and 'Moderator's lace' to Wilma Welsh (her home church). From left, Rev. Thomas Kay, Jessie Bush (session clerk), Welsh and Vera Teasdale (former session clerk).

"All my congregations are amazing," says presbytery clerk Janet MacDowell. She says there are a number of students from the presbytery attending Knox College and the Presbyterian College, including two candidates for ordination. Around 200 presbytery youth attended CY06 this summer.

In October, the churches held a walk, run and cycle to benefit Towards A World Without AIDS. Rev. Jeff Veenstra, minister at St. Andrew's, Hespeler, says the idea came from his trip to Malawi on a PWS&D study tour last year. A planning committee organized the five- to 20-kilometre event held near Cambridge.

"It was an incredible day. People were just really thrilled," says Veenstra. There were 215 participants and more than 20 volunteers from across the presbytery. The event raised nearly $30,000.

Ministers in the Northern Kingdom meet once a month for a social event. The presbytery's rural towns northwest of Guelph include Harriston, Drayton and Palmerston.

Superstars is an annual presbytery day-long youth event, with the winner of the games played hosting the event the following year.

Knox, Waterloo, has the largest LOGOS program in Canada. LOGOS is a weekly ministry focusing on Bible study, worship skills, recreation and family time. Adults are "table parents" for the youth during the family time meal. Knox has been running the program for 13 years, and Rev. Linda Ashfield says it helps connect families.

"It's really, really been an amazing thing for our congregation," says Ashfield. "We can't quite imagine our church without it now." Every Thursday evening, up to 100 people participate.

Knox is starting a new family ministry program. Geared towards encouraging young families, Ashfield says it will help support parents to nurture their children's faith.

The youth at Knox went on a mission trip in 2005 to Winnipeg where they helped out at the PCC's aborignal ministries Anishinabe and Flora House. The 23 participants built a playground and painted rooms during their stay and have plans to return next summer. The church also holds Food For Thought, a weekly College and Careers group.

St. Andrew's, Kitchener, is the largest Presbyterian church in Canada, with a membership of close to 1,800. Rev. Mark





Left: A large St. Andrew's, Kitchener, work crew laboured for two days clearing three properties in the Long Beach, Mississippi area most directly affected by the storm surge. Inset: An Anukshuk left behind by the crew as a reminder to the unseen benefactors that their plight will not be forgotten by their friends north of the border.

Lewis says a team of people, including youth, recently went on a trip to help rebuild hurricane-damaged areas in New Orleans. The downtown church has an active youth group and a growing Sunday school.

St. Giles, Cambridge, is in the process of building a children and youth ministry. Rev. Penny Garrison says this summer the church launched Centre Stage Youth Ministries, a drama and music program for its youth and the community.

Garrison says the Sunday school has been growing in the past four and a half years. The church's space is limited, but Garrison says this is a good problem. The church had its 50th anniversary last year and is now in strategic planning.

Children's ministry has been growing at Central in Cambridge. Rev. Aubrey Botha says in the past five years the number of children has increased from a handful to more than 100. A second floor in the church was added to allow the Sunday school to have more room. The church has a new youth leader and a youth group that is getting stronger.

St. Andrew's, Hespeler, in northern Cambridge has a mid-week LOGOS program. The church also has an active youth group. Doon, Kitchener, has a youth group and a growing Sunday school. St. Andrew's Galt, Cambridge, has a small Sunday school but offers a mid-week Kids' Club.

Knox, Guelph, has a Wednesday night program called Feed Your Faith. Now in its second year, the program is drawing a good response, says Rev. Thomas Kay. There is a meal, contemporary worship time and programs for different age groups. Knox is focusing on developing a stronger youth ministry. "We're certainly hoping that we will see growth in that younger portion of our congregation, that we will continue to have a vibrant existence downtown," says Kay.

Kitchener East's seven-year-old weekly drop-in centre for parents and children has "proved to be a very successful outreach program," says Rev. Mark Richardson.

Richardson says all ages are involved in the church. "I know I'm blessed to be in the younger congregation with a good mix of ages, and there's a respect and a trust and appreciation for the younger ages," he says. Each year the youth participate in World Vision's 30-Hour Famine.

St. Andrew's, Mount Forest, just started a high school youth group this fall in addition to its younger youth group. Last summer on Friday nights, the church ran a program called The Back Door to reach out to teens in the area. For the past three years, the church has offered an after-school Kidz Survivor Klub to help children develop street skills.



Right: Grade 4, 5, and 6 students learning to crochet at a weekly family time session at Knox, Waterloo.

"It was a lot of fun and certainly made a lot of contact with people in the community," says Rev. Nan St. Louis, minister at St. Andrew's with a two-point charge at Conn, Knox. The service has started a blended worship with a praise band, and "most of the people coming in really enjoy it. We see a lot of new faces coming in the door," she says.

Knox's Galt, Cambridge, uses the David C. Cook Sunday school curriculum. Children ages three to eight attend the Noah's Park class, which may include a puppet show and crafts. The junior youth class is called Knox Rocks, and the church plans to hire a senior youth leader.

Knox Preston, Cambridge, uses a one-room Sunday school, covering major Bible stories over a four-year cycle.

St. Andrew's, Arthur, recently started a youth group. The church also helps with a local Youth for Christ drop-in centre called The Door and participates in an ecumenical Vacation Bible School. Rev. Brice Martin says the church built a new addition three years ago. Martin has a two-point charge with St. Andrew's, Gordonville, a congregation with many young families. "There's a lot of joy in the church," he says.

Renovations and relocations are happening at several churches. Rev. Dr. Linda Bell at Gale, Elmira, says the congregation is looking to build a new church a kilometre and a half from its current location. The new site will allow for highway visibility, more parking and future expansion.

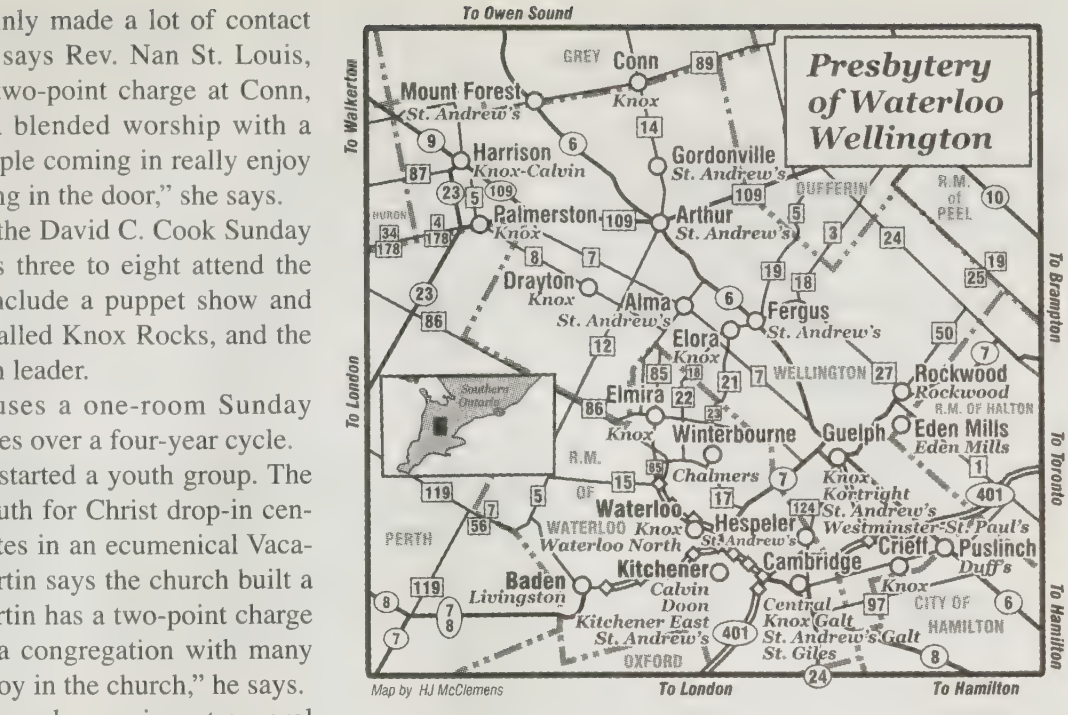
Bell says the congregation sees the need to build a new church and is committed to the project. "There is a strong conviction telling us it is our turn, to do it for the future generations," she says.

Calvin, Kitchener, is sharing its church building with The Church of the Lord, a Korean Presbyterian congregation that began early in 2005. Kortright, Guelph, bought and relocated to an elementary school last year. St. Andrew's, Mount Forest, is upgrading its facilities, and next year for its 150th anniversary will renovate the main building.

There are new initiatives across the presbytery as churches take on exciting projects and modern elements. This fall, trailblazers at St. Andrew's, Guelph, signed up for a program called The Bible Trail, developed by ministers Rev. John Borthwick and Rev. Janice Hazlett. The Trail involves reading and preaching the entire Bible over two and a half years. The church's website has a blog with updates and comments on the progress. Trail parties encourage accountability in small group study, and monthly large group meetings called "summits" allow everyone to meet with the ministers. More than 60 people are participating.

Some congregations are moving towards modern styles of worship. Elora, Knox, has started using multi-media technologies. "It's a gentle shift," says Rev. Kees Vandermey, who has a two-point charge with St. Andrew's, Alma, and is interim moderator at Knox-Calvin, Harriston. "I think we're trying to keep up to date to see where our culture is going."

St. Andrew's, Fergus, has been offering a weekly contemporary service in addition to its traditional service since January 1. "It's been going strong ever since," says Rev. David Whitecross. The change, which includes the use of Power-



Point and drums, has increased attendance, offerings, commitment and involvement in the church. "It's made a difference," says Whitecross. "I recommend other churches make the jump to the 21st century—it's worth it." The church also has four active youth groups.

Many missions trips to Nicaragua have taken place in the presbytery through PAN—Presbyterians Aiding Nicaraguans. St. Andrew's, Arthur, is planning a trip in January 2007—its fourth in a row—while St. Andrew's, Fergus, is planning its third trip with 26 people in March. The church also supports a sister church in Haiti through missions trips and financial donations. Elora, Knox, had its third mission trip to Nicaragua this past July. The church also runs local missions projects through K.n.e.c.t. (Knox Elora Care Team). Kitchener East makes annual mission trips with Missionary Ventures in Guelph to Honduras. This spring, several senior youth group kids would like to go, says Rev. Mark Richardson. St. Andrew's, Hespeler, is raising funds for 15 people travelling to the Ukraine in June on a PWS&D trip.

Westminster-St. Paul's in Guelph hosts a monthly seniors' dinner and devotion night. Rev. Karla Wubbenhorst says it has been a very positive outreach, with up to 100 people in attendance.

Lay leadership is strong in the presbytery, with many churches involving members in pastoral care. There are several Stephen Ministry congregations, which train lay people to provide one-on-one care to others in need of support.

With its diversity of small towns and different-sized city centres, the presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington has an interesting blend of churches and the presbytery is looking forward to hosting the General Assembly in 2007.

"It's certainly an area where there is a lot of growth," says Nan St. Louis. "I think we have some cutting-edge congregations who are trying some new things."

Jennifer Higgs is a freelance writer.

Fire and ice

There is nothing that is difficult or enslaving that Jesus can't handle

BY DAVID WEBBER

It is Advent! Everyone in the Webber household who lives on the shores of Lac La Hache is hoping for fire and ice. Fire and ice is a tradition that goes all the way back to my own childhood, and in some form or other, back to most rural Canadian childhoods, I expect. When I was a kid, about the beginning of Advent, if the local slough could get a good freeze on it before any snow came, it became a sea of glass. Every kid in the lumber camp would work his or her tail off scrounging wood and dragging it onto the ice. Anything that would burn and wasn't nailed down was fair game, which once caused an outhouse to mysteriously disappear. All of the wood was stacked to form a huge bonfire. At night, whole families would gather for the ritual of fire and ice. The bonfire was lit, skates were strapped on, and soon blades were flashing and sizzling on the virgin ice. You could skate around on the edge of the dark for miles. It was the most liberating experience I have ever had in my life. All the time, the pillar of fire was both a beacon and warmth. All the time, the pillar of fire guided us with its blaze, warmed our very beings and was the centre for hot chocolate fellowship. The pillar of fire provided for our freedom on ice. It was absolutely wonderful.

Fire and ice; it's truly a Canadian tradition that often happens during the season of Advent. This year, as I hope for and fondly remember fire and ice, our church Advent project is reading through the Gospels. Last night I read the saying of Jesus, "I am the light of the world." (John 8:12) According to John's Gospel, Jesus said this on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem. This eight-day feast was designed to be a memorial of the wilderness journey of the Exodus. In Jesus' day, one of the traditions that took place during the Feast of Tabernacles was the lighting of the huge candelabra in the Temple. It was to remind the people of the pillar of fire that God used to guide Israel out of slavery and through the darkness of their wilderness journey. In addition to this, another tradition of the Feast of Tabernacles involved torches that lit up the whole of the city. Again, it was to remind people of the pillar of fire God used to accompany and guide Israel to freedom. Against this backdrop of fire and light and travelling through the dark wilderness to freedom … on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus says: "I am the light of the world."

It is like Jesus saying, "I am your pillar of fire." I have to confess I have never really appreciated Jesus this way before. It appears that this is my Advent revelation this year. I have never direct-



Against this backdrop of fire and light and travelling through the dark wilderness to freedom … on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus says: 'I am the light of the world'

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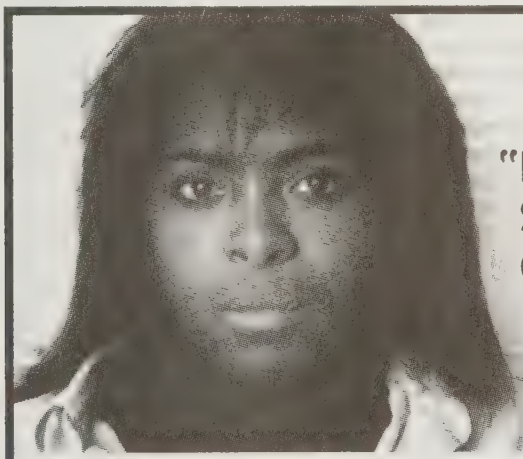
ly connected Jesus to a divine companion light that leads me out of bondage and through the wilderness to set me free. I have never really thought of Jesus in this Exodus kind of way. I have usually thought of Jesus in terms of salvation, forgiveness, healing, the revelation of God and such. But if Jesus says to me, "I am your pillar of fire," it is like he is asking me, "David, so what is your Egypt? What enslaves you? What bondage do you need to be released from? What holds you captive? What tough wilderness do you have to slog through to find freedom? What darkness is seeking to envelope you on the way to liberty?" It is like Jesus stands before me and says, "Remember God with his people in the Exodus? David, I am your pillar of fire! I am the way through it all for you. There is nothing which is hard or enslaving or dark or wilderness in your life that I cannot and will not see you through … nothing. "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12) Absolutely wonderful! Just like fire and ice.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"I am this dark world's light;
Look unto me, thy morn shall rise,
And all thy day be bright."
I looked to Jesus, and I found
In him my star, my sun;
And in that light of life I'll walk
Till travelling days are done.
– HORATIUS BONAR, 1808-1889

Rev. David Webber is a contributing editor to the *Record*. He is a minister of the Cariboo, B.C. house church ministry. His most recent book is *Like a Winter's Aspen: Embracing the Creator's Fire.*

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GREG'S CHRISTMAS EMAIL

It was brutally cold in Winnipeg yesterday, blowing snow and biting wind – a sure sign that Christmas is coming.

I spent most of the day delivering Christmas hampers to families in tough circumstances.

Boarded-up windows, children's toys on the snow banks, these were the images of the day – along with some tremendously grateful families who stopped worrying for the moment and enjoyed some Christmas spirit.

As the sun was going down, the man who answered the last door offered a gift of his own – a candy cane for my sister and me. How could we say no? He was offering what he could and let me tell you, that was the best candy cane I've tasted in a while.

So what's the point of my e-mail? I wanted to wish each of you a Merry Christmas. Have a candy cane (heck, give one to a friend) and think about how lucky you are.

Peace, Greg

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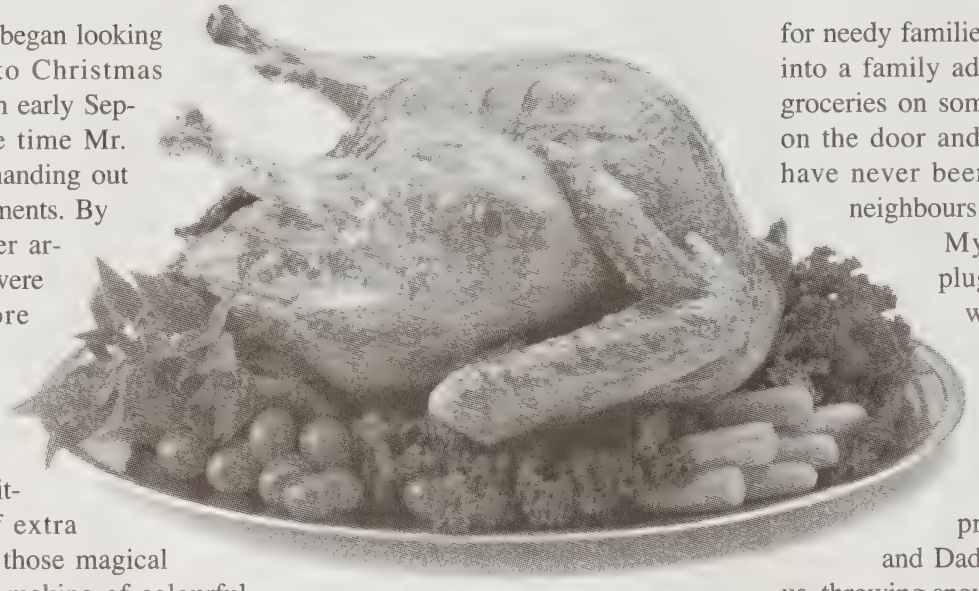
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It's Jesus' birthday

Gifts are easily forgotten, but not laughter and family

As a boy, I began looking forward to Christmas vacation in early September, about the time Mr. Kowalski started handing out those math assignments. By the time December arrived, my parents were whispering more than usual and I was wondering what magical things they had in store. There was little in the way of extra money, so one of those magical traditions was the making of colourful candles we would sell door to door, hoping to earn enough to buy gifts. Not all of the traditions were welcome. Sometimes my parents enjoyed travelling to visit relatives and friends. They had a highly sophisticated method of choosing whom we would visit, which involved the laying of a map of Canada on the floor and the tossing of relatives' pictures in the air. Whoever had their picture land closest to their hometown would receive a complementary weekend visit from the Callaways. Sometimes we'd end up in Carstairs, Alberta, and sometimes in Loon Lake, Saskatchewan. As I recall, my father never used a map, he went on faith. I always felt like the Wise Men must have felt, heading off on those trips.



Our turkey was surrounded not only by ravenous relatives, but by famished friends

Dad's personal goal was to drive at least 500 miles without stopping at any restrooms. Every few hours, we'd tell him that we had "to go," but he would respond, "Eh? You say something? I can't hear you past these earmuffs." Every once in a while Mom would offer to drive on the slippery roads, knowing that Dad would not let her unless he went blind in both eyes or suffered a level three heart attack. On these trips, my sister and I sat in the back seat pinching and poking each other, and to this day, when I think of Christmas miracles, I think of the fact that my parents did not lock us both in the trunk and abandon the car.

Apart from these short forays, I loved Christmas vacation. Though my parents had no manuals on creating great vacations, they seemed intuitively to know how. For one thing, they invested in others. Our turkey was surrounded not only by ravenous relatives, but by famished friends. Mom and Dad were always on the prowl for lonely looks in the church foyer, or neighbours who had no family within driving distance. To my parents, relationships were more important than a perfect meal or a tidy house. From the time our children were small, we have done simple things to teach them to help others. This has included buying small bags of groceries for needy families. In fact, it has turned into a family adventure. We leave the groceries on someone's doorstep, bang on the door and run. In 18 years, we have never been caught. Unless our neighbours are reading this.

My parents also unplugged the TV. Oh sure, we had some great times together watching classic movies, but as much as possible we were encouraged to be outside in that pre-Nintendo era. Mom and Dad were often there with us, throwing snowballs or building forts. With no television, we learned to ice skate and carol sing and come up with our own entertainment. Perhaps that's why my brother offered me a shiny nickel one icy Christmas Eve. All I had to do was lick a metal doorknob (yes, I obliged).

Perhaps, best of all, we were taught to remember that it is not our birthday we celebrate at Christmas. Once, while I was drooling my way through the toy section of the Sears catalogue, my mother put her arm about my shoulder and kindly reminded me that the gifts would be a little meagre this year. Sensing my disappointment, she asked if I thought Jesus got much for his birthday. I had to think about it, but I said he got gold, frankincense and myrrh, which I thought might have been a plastic toy of some sort or maybe a casserole. "I think we can afford that much," she laughed. I've forgotten most of the presents she bought me, but I remember the gift of her laughter.

Phil Callaway is a popular speaker and the author of a dozen books. His second novel, *Wonders Never Cease*, is due out in July. Visit him at www.philcallaway.com

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CAMPBELL, Keith M., long-time faithful member, elder and former clerk of session of Glencoe Presbyterian Church, Glencoe, Ont. passed away on June 24, 2006 at the age of 70. He is greatly missed.

HUNTER, The Rev. E. H. (Hasey), died on Thursday, September 28, 2006 in his 97th year. Beloved husband of the late Mary Helena Baxter. Loving father of Howard, Sheelah Brodie, Alexandra and Des. The Rev. Hunter faithfully served parishes in Ireland, Miramichi, N.B., St. David's, Niagara Falls, Ont., Melville Presbyterian Church, West Hill, Ont. and St. Andrew's, Gananoque, Ont.

MACTAVISH, Alex, 1928-2006. "Blessed is the man whose delight is in the law of the Lord." Alex dedicated 30 years as Clerk of Session at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Dresden, Ont. He served church and community with a servant's heart. Survived by wife Joyce, loving sons Bruce, Brian, Murray and their families.

MCDONALD, Glen A., long-time faithful member and elder of Glencoe Presbyterian Church, Glencoe, Ont. passed away on August 12, 2006 at the age of 85. He will be greatly missed.

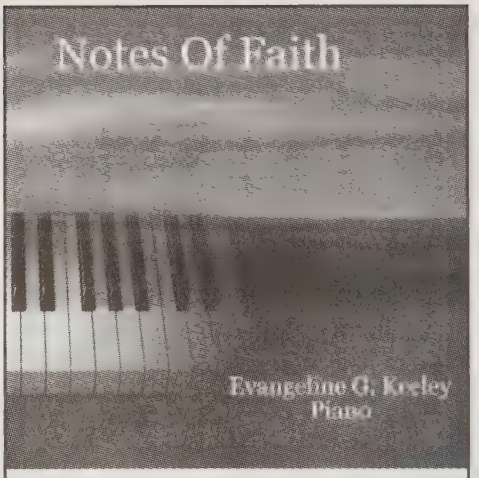
THOMSON, Edith, September 12, 1905-April 12, 2006. Edith was born in the village of Monkton, Ont. She was educated there in Stratford and at Queen's University. In 1926, she married Rev. E. A. Thomson and moved to Elora, Ont. where he was the minister. Their three children, David, Hugh and Margaret (Simard) were born there. In 1941 the family moved to Toronto where the Rev. Thomson took up work in the field of Christian education and eventually became Clerk of Assembly (1949-1973). And so began her long association with Calvin Church, Toronto. She was a kind and gentle lady, Christ's servant and the helpmate of her husband in both parish work and in the executive offices he held in the Presbyterian Church.

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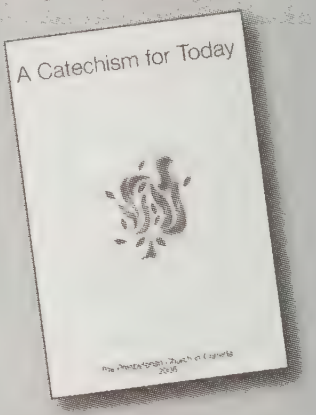
Evangeline Keeley is the Music Director at St Andrew's Presbyterian in Winnipeg and a local performer on piano and organ.

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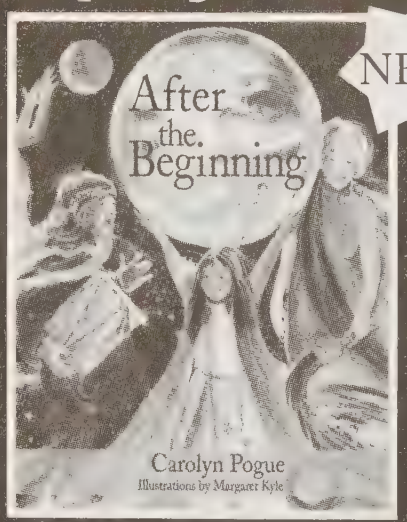
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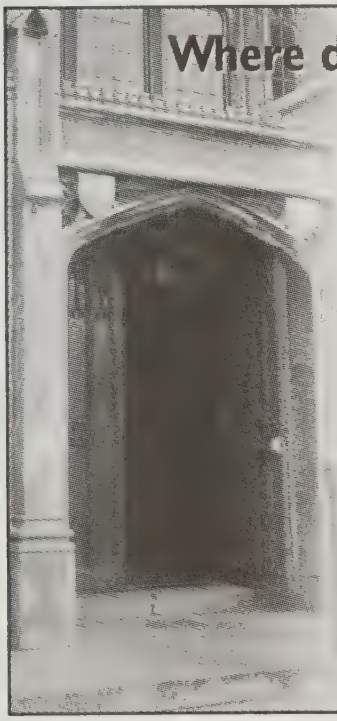
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Called to Wonder Word List [A. Mary;] B. David; C. Abednego; D. Naomi; E. blessed; F. living; G. Genesis; H. Hannah, Eli; I. Saul, Paul; J. resurrection; K. disciple; L. Noah, ark; M. Solomon; N. love; O. prayer; P. worry; Q. feet; R. tooth, tooth; S. Thaddaeus; T. yeast; U. taught; V. Father, hallowed; W. fight; X. proud; Y. why; Z. truth; AA. faith; BB. thou, thy, thine; CC. bread, wine; DD. servant; EE. thank; FF. flog; GG. weeds; HH. Hosannah; II. Daddy; JJ. thought; KK. depth.

Called to Wonder Quotation I pray ... that Christ may live in your hearts through faith as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to understand...what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. – FROM EPHESIANS 3: 17-19

called to wonder



CREATED BY JENNIFER O'FARRELL

The holidays are the perfect time to lounge and linger over a puzzle !

Using the clue on the left, fill in the answers on the right side. Then transfer the letters into the numbered spaces in the puzzle boxes below. The first answer is shown. A solid-coloured square marks the end of a word. (Two Y's and four T's are already in place.)

A. the mother of Jesus **M** 16 **A** 4 **R** 37 **Y** 25 (Matthew 1: 18)

B. the shepherd king ___ 65 ___ 86 ___ 81 ___ 1 ___ 159 (1 Samuel 16: 13)

C. furnace friend of Shadrach and Meshach ___ 52 ___ 131 ___ 75 ___ 121 ___ 73 ___ 115 ___ 208 ___ 251 (Daniel 3: 19)

D. Ruth's mother-in-law ___ 58 ___ 90 ___ 62 ___ 219 ___ 126 (Ruth 1: 8)

E. ___ 55 ___ 141 ___ 64 ___ 14 ___ 186 ___ 101 ___ 74 are the pure in heart, for they will see God (Matthew 5: 8)

F. my soul thirsts for God, for the ___ 19 ___ 77 ___ 100 ___ 152 ___ 165 ___ 144 God (Psalm 42: 2)

G. the first book of the Hebrew scriptures ___ 40 ___ 108 ___ 148 ___ 151 ___ 48 ___ 231 ___ 246

H. Samuel, son of ___ 129 ___ 190 ___ 120 ___ 143 ___ 234 ___ 174, awoke ___ 104 ___ 176 ___ 13, the temple priest (1 Samuel 1: 20) (1 Samuel 3: 5)

I. changed his name from ___ 198 ___ 99 ___ 39 ___ 243 to ___ 195 ___ 17 ___ 112 ___ 226 (Acts 13: 9)

J. the act of returning to life ___ 194 ___ 133 ___ 34 ___ 241 ___ 3 ___ 184 ___ 142 ___ 10 ___ 173 ___ 225 ___ 71 ___ 244 (1 Peter 1: 3)

K. a follower of Jesus ___ 207 ___ 44 ___ 197 ___ 182 ___ 185 ___ 2 ___ 205 ___ 54 (Luke 9: 16)

L. builder of a boat ___ 78 ___ 50 ___ 138 ___ 163 + the boat ___ 66 ___ 109 ___ 169 (Genesis 6: 13)

M. builder of the temple ___ 210 ___ 38 ___ 242 ___ 180 ___ 95 ___ 80 ___ 157 (1 Kings 6)

N. ... and the greatest of these is ___ 79 ___ 248 ___ 21 ___ 223 (1 Corinthians 13: 13)

O. a devotional activity ___ 105 ___ 85 ___ 8 ___ 216 ___ 179 ___ 60 (Matthew 21: 22)

P. concern or anxiety ___ 107 ___ 217 ___ 116 ___ 53 ___ 5 (Matthew 6: 25)

Q. Jesus washes the disciples' ___ 42 ___ 175 ___ 209 ___ 237 (John 13)

R. life for life, eye for eye, ___ 191 ___ 61 ___ 171 ___ 118 ___ 233 for ___ 6 ___ 203 ___ 111 ___ 102 ___ 189 (Exodus 21: 24)

S. name of one of the twelve ___ 88 ___ 238 ___ 47 ___ 149 ___ 158 ___ 124 ___ 22 ___ 218 ___ 117 (Mark 3: 18)

T. a little ___ 49 ___ 130 ___ 134 ___ 200 ___ 187 leavens the whole batch of dough (Galatians 5: 9)

U. Jesus ___ 35 ___ 164 ___ 27 ___ 59 ___ 98 ___ 232 them as one having authority (Matthew 7: 29)

V. Jesus said to them, "When you pray, say ___ 249 ___ 214 ___ 145 ___ 29 ___ 239 ___ 32, ___ 7 ___ 220 ___ 227 ___ 236 ___ 168 ___ 122 ___ 82 ___ 140 be your name ..." (Luke 11: 2)

W. ... so that by following them you may fight the good ___ 240 ___ 23 ___ 153 ___ 123 ___ 45 (1 Timothy 1: 18)

X. God opposes the ___ 84 ___ 28 ___ 177 ___ 193 ___ 114, but gives grace to the humble (James 4: 6)

Y. "My God, my God, ___ 230 ___ 154 ___ 87 have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27: 46)

Z. "I am the way, and the ___ 162 ___ 70 ___ 94 ___ 33 ___ 183, and the life." (John 14: 6)

AA. "Your ___ 181 ___ 43 ___ 83 ___ 136 ___ 146 has made you well." (Mark 5: 34)

BB. ***you***, ***your***, *and* ***yours*** in KJV ___ 125 ___ 103 ___ 211 ___ 51, ___ 188 ___ 11 ___ 221, and ___ 155 ___ 89 ___ 57 ___ 67 ___ 160

CC. at communion we eat ___ 222 ___ 132 ___ 228 ___ 156 ___ 76 and drink ___ 204 ___ 20 ___ 113 ___ 199 (Luke 22: 19-20)

DD. "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and ___ 192 ___ 56 ___ 12 ___ 178 ___ 96 ___ 170 ___ 167 of all." (Mark 9: 35)

EE. Let's ___ 15 ___ 36 ___ 119 ___ 202 ___ 201 God for the steadfast love and wonderful works given to us (Psalm 107: 21)

FF. to beat severely with a whip or rod ___ 224 ___ 235 ___ 26 ___ 69 (Luke 18: 33)

GG. the parable of ___ 172 ___ 206 ___ 30 ___ 166 ___ 127 among the wheat (Matthew 13:24-30)

HH. "___ 137 ___ 106 ___ 247 ___ 196 ___ 24 ___ 139 ___ 31 ___ 213! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!" (John 12: 13)

II. meaning of the Aramaic word, "Abba" (Romans 8: 15)

___ 252 ___ 147 ___ 229 ___ 135 ___ 18

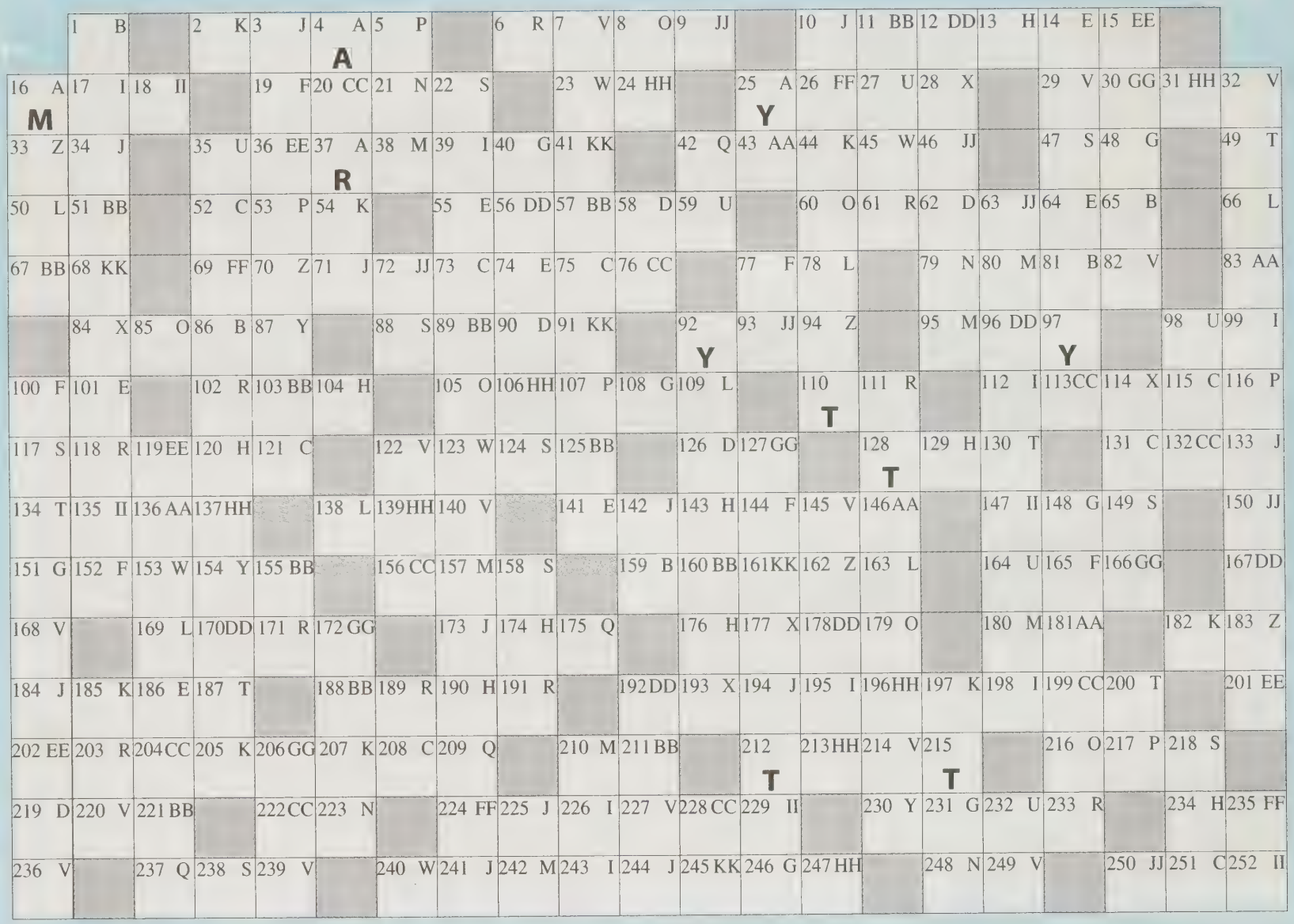
JJ. the process of thinking or reasoning (2 Corinthians 10: 5)

___ 63 ___ 46 ___ 93 ___ 72 ___ 250 ___ 150 ___ 9

KK. "O the ___ 68 ___ 245 ___ 161 ___ 91 ___ 41 of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!" (Romans 11: 33)



Paul's Prayer



Answers on page 43.



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Belleville, Ont., St. Columba; Rev. Katherine McCloskey, PO Box 118, Stirling, ON K0K 3E0; 613-395-5006; katherinejonah@hotmail.com.

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Much joy in villages

Presbyterian women make celebrations possible in rural India

Last month I wrote to you while on the first leg of a visit to Chennai in southern India. Our time there was followed by much joy and several special events in the villages on the Bhil field in central India, beginning with celebrations at the airport in Indore where a large group gathered to welcome us.

Later, we were warmly welcomed at a dinner by Bishop Laxman Maida of the Diocese of Bhopal and laden with garlands. I had a gold-coloured crown topped with a peacock feather placed on my head.

The new wing of the Jobat Christian School was dedicated in loving memory of PCC deaconess Mabel Booth. Funding was made possible through the Women's Missionary Society. The community is excited to have such a new school, which they proudly claim to be the most modern building in Jobat. In anticipation of its opening, fall enrolment increased by 50 students to 230, and I had the privilege of cutting the ribbon and unveiling the new school plaque.

A few days later, more than 3,000 people gathered in Amkhut to celebrate the acquittal and release of the prisoners who were imprisoned in January 2004 and not released until May 31, 2006. The men were jailed following an incident in Amkhut. The Christian community, including the school, was invaded and attacked by Hindu extremists from a bordering region. Several other villages were also attacked, with churches being damaged, homes of Christians being burned, people being beaten and one church burned. A Hindu man was also killed, and the Christians who admitted to owning a gun were imprisoned. About 15 men, plus the Amkhut minister and school principal, were jailed. The minister and principal were released on bail after a few months.



The Moderator decked out the Indian way: with a peacock feather capping her crown and a garland of marigolds and roses.

(More information on this incident is available in the International Ministries section on the PCC website, www.presbyterian.ca.)

Our tour continued with a visit to the school at Ratlam, where a new dual library/computer room was dedicated. This classroom was made possible in part by a gift from the Robertson Auxiliary WMS of Milton, Ont.; the balance came from the national Women's Missionary Society. This new classroom has helped meet government requirements for schools in this area.

Following our time in the Vindhya Sapura area, Rev. Ron Wallace and I travelled to Srinagar near Kashmir, to attend the Church of North India partners meeting. We had an opportunity to meet school children and a small group of Christians in a congregation in Srinagar. They shared their struggles and pain with us. Their building had been burned twice by terrorists. I was one of four in the group of partners to be presented with the Mahatma Gandhi Peace Medal by the All India Gandhian Worker's Society of New Delhi. It represents our joint concern for peace.

I give thanks to God for the release of the prisoners and the joy that they shared with us. The WMS is to be commended for its continuation of its "second mile giving" by making it possible for the new Jobat School and the Ratlam classroom to become a reality.

M. Wilma Welsh

MODERATOR'S ITINERARY

Dec. 3 **St. John's, Port Perry, Ont. morning worship**

We warmly thank all the children who submitted artwork for our cover contest.



Jared Koch (grade 5), Ilderton, Ont.



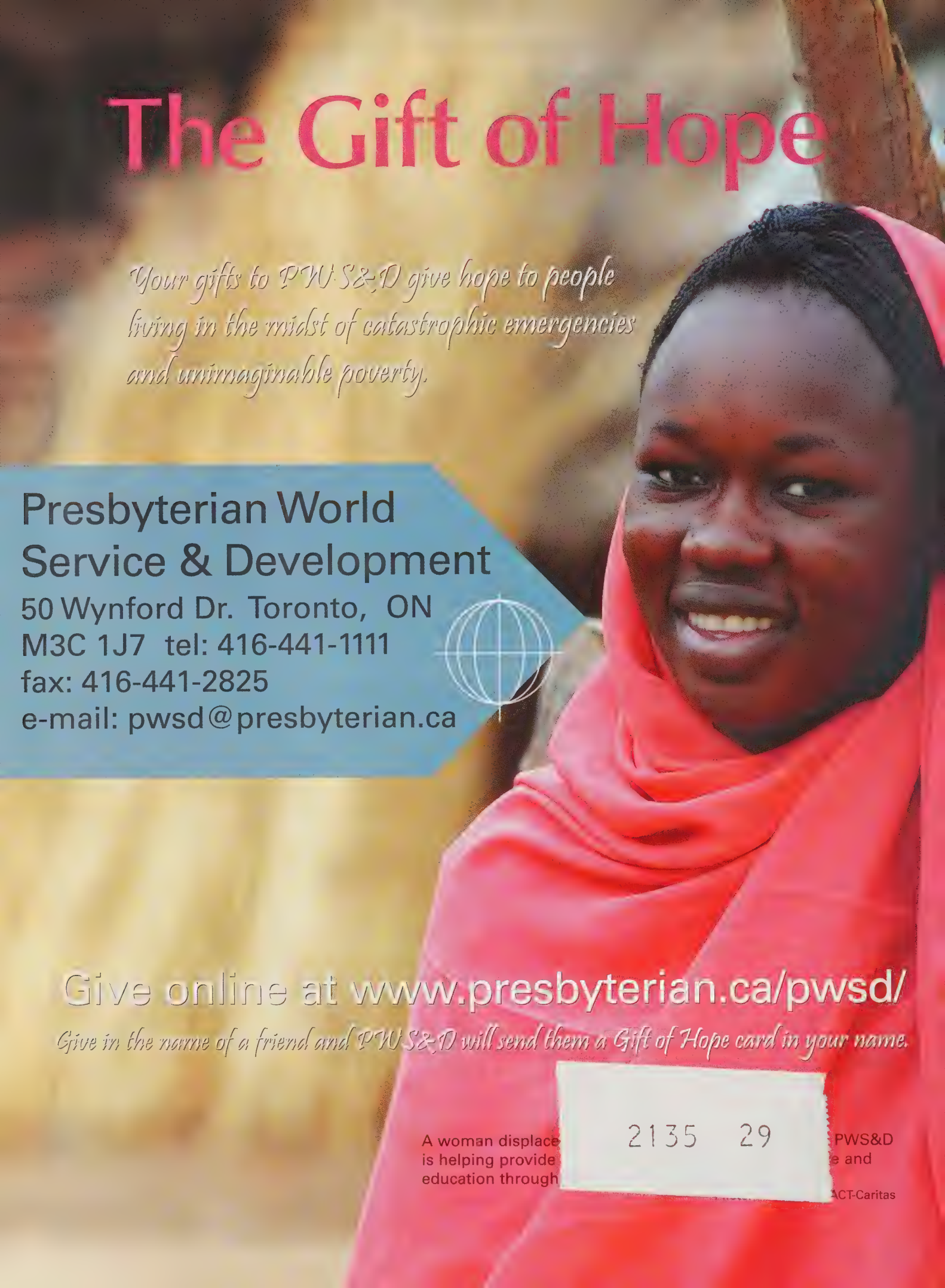
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Primary children, St. Paul's, Bramalea, Ont.


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